

# **Horizon**

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND ART

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## **THE POPULAR PRESS?**

*by* TOM HARRISSON

## **'THE TEMPTATION' OF HIERONYMUS BOSCH**

*by* ROBERT MELVILLE

## **MEETING THE MASTER A STORY**

*by* MARGARET GARDINER

## **D. H. LAWRENCE IN BANDOL**

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OCTOBER VOL. II, No. 10 1940

***Edited by Cyril Connolly***

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# HORIZON

EDITED BY CYRIL CONNOLLY

*Vol. II. No. 10. October 1940*

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# COMMENT

BEYOND St. Ives projects the Celtic toe of England; granite cliffs, wild moorland, quartz and logan stones, the melancholy of all Celtic strongholds where the past is stronger than the present, and where the south-west wind, which rules Cornwall as it rules Kerry, Finistère or Galicia, spreads its religion of the Dead. Here, where the map is black with memorials, empty of woods and villages, where the sea has more names than the land, is Zennor and the isolated row of cottages that Lawrence shared with the Murrays during the Great War. In this number *Horizon* raises his ghost.

We have had too much Lawrence lately, and Hugh Kingsmill's book has crystallized the reaction against him. His disciples made him sublime, and Kingsmill ridiculous, for he traced the decline of the artist in the growth of the prophet. In this number we print two articles which go some way towards giving him his real value, for though his name now carries with it the irritation of the day before yesterday, and though many of us would now find it difficult to re-read his books, because so much of his work is peevish, repetitive, and sloppy, his influence is still strong and genuine, his problems are ours. Lawrence, like Keats, was broken by England, it turned the passionate Keatsian artist who wrote *The White Peacock* and *Sons and Lovers*, into the man with a grievance, and Zennor was the turning point. It was here that he was arrested as a spy, watched by detectives, suspected by the countryside. The Rainbow affair and, afterwards, the confiscation of his paintings were snubs from the top, from the narrow and anæmic civil servants who were his natural enemy. The Zennor spy scares were from the bottom, from the class to which he belonged and the country people he wrote about. Up till then he had been one of the lyrical accepters, afterwards he became one of the didactic critics of life, and as his illness grew worse his irritation increased; he often seems animated, like Wyndham Lewis, by envy alone, to be as angry with his admirers as with his foes. To rebel against England, as have done so many of her artists, requires philosophic patience as well as fire and courage, Lawrence was too sick to possess it, he 'rose' to each new insult and became querulous in his opposition. Nevertheless,

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**MACMILLAN**

if a revolution ever takes place in England it will owe something to him as a precursor. Every writer looks at one moment on the world as it is, and as it might be. Some set about changing it, others sigh, or frown and cover their eyes. The writers who have stood out most in the last hundred years, from Tolstoy, Flaubert, Rimbaud, Baudelaire, Whitman onwards, have attacked the emotional values of the Bourgeois; they have not set out to destroy capitalism by intellectual and economic arguments, but to attack the forces of stupidity, cruelty, hypocrisy and greed which control the human heart and flourish particularly in the French and English middle class family. To make war on the Bourgeois, to reassert the supremacy of the heart over the pocket, one must be a bourgeois oneself, and yet, unlike Hardy or Galsworthy, strong enough not to return to the fold. Lawrence fought ruthlessly for the values of the heart. His opposition to the sheep with a bite, the wishy-washy English public and their prim gelded intelligentsia of civil servants, dons, and Georgians, even drove him sometimes into a dark mystical crypto-Fascist belly-worship, which is understandable, for Fascism was, in its beginning, also an emotional rebellion. Yet his work lives on in those of his disciples, like Auden and Henry Miller, who admit their great debt to him. His was not the planned attack of Marxists and Socialists on the Victorian *status quo*, but a series of limited but expert acts of sabotage culminating in his most complete book, *Lady Chatterley*, and directed at the weak spot in the Bourgeois, his attitude to his women. Lawrence wrote as if he felt convinced that he was the only Englishman who had ever made a woman happy, he had none of the sex loyalty by which the gentleman protects his interests, he wanted women everywhere to kick over the traces, but when he met the really independent woman, in Mabel Dodge, he was shocked by her power. What he wanted subconsciously was that every wife should leave her husband and come to him—the husband also.

It is interesting to wonder what Lawrence would be doing to-day. Would he be in the Ministry of Information or the Home Guard? No, he would still be at Zennor, still be persecuted for his beard and his painting and his ex-German wife, unless he had managed to get away to California. One can even imagine him flirting with the Nazis, or getting a dark African shock from the hand-shake of General Franco.



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*Oh, but wait!*

*Let him meet a new emotion, let him be faced with another man's need.*

*Let him come home to a bit of moral difficulty,*

*Let life face him with a new demand on his understanding*

*And then watch him go soggy, like a wet meringue.*

*Watch him turn into a mess, either a fool or a bully.*

*Just watch the display of him, confronted with a new demand on his intelligence,*

*A new life demand.*

*How beastly the bourgeois is, especially the male of the species . . .*

*Standing in their thousands, these appearances in damp England.*

*What a pity they can't all be kicked over like sickening toadstools, and left to melt back swiftly into the soil of England.*

This poster-poetry, this literary wall-chalking is needed to-day, and even more needed are the wit, lucidity and free imagination behind it. The England of to-day knows how to fight. If it would lead Europe, it must also know how to live, for a new Europe cannot be created out of the insular virtues: courage, endurance, and xenophobia. Reading Lawrence, one becomes aware of the radical changes in temperament as well as outlook that must be made, and how very far we are from making them, how strong the England of his enemy Baldwin remains.

There is another reason for printing articles about Lawrence. The last number of *Horizon* was a success because it was a topical and political number, and such success is most welcome. But the interests of a literary magazine must remain literary. Journalism is flourishing in this war, literature is not, and with articles on Lawrence and Bosch, *Horizon* returns to the lonely and disheartening isolation in which live artists who, like Lawrence, resist the temptation to identify themselves with a movement or a system. Mahomet is still waiting for the mountain.

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'... I wish it could be more,' writes the anonymous donor, 'especially after Stephen Spender's article in the September issue. Many, many congratulations and good wishes.'

Free gifts, of course, are welcome. At the moment, *Horizon* readers are getting a little more than they pay for, largely owing to the difficulties of distribution.

We don't ask for charity. We do ask every reader who feels as enthusiastic as the anonymous friend quoted above to find another reader for us, to place a standing order with his bookseller, to send us a subscription—or, if he can afford it, to take out a subscription for a friend.

*The next two issues of HORIZON will include*

a reply to Tom Harrisson, Elizabeth Bowen's *Irish Journal*, Erica Mann's *American Letter*, *Things to Change*, by Cyril Connolly, and the conclusion of Brian Howard's *Civilians at Bay*.

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# **‘WRITING FOR THE PRESS’**

THIS publication should be in the hands of all who are considering the possibilities of writing short articles or stories. It contains much useful information on this subject—some of its chief contributors being well-known editors and journalists who are, of course, qualified by their experience and knowledge to speak with authority. They give many valuable hints to the new writer and show how wide is the field of opportunity which awaits the newcomer into the literary sphere.

A large part of ‘Writing for the Press’ is devoted to a description of the work of the London School of Journalism, which was founded in 1919 at the instance of the late Lord Northcliffe. It is the only School of its kind which enjoys the patronage of great newspaper proprietors and editors, and has won a unique reputation as an attractive centre of instruction in story and article writing. Its range of subjects (taught by correspondence) include:

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W. R. RODGERS

## AWAKE!

Wind that speeds the bee and plucks the bee-line  
Into bows and bends, that clips the spoken word  
From the open lips, that claps and batters  
The bent-backed and running roaring waters,  
That squats and squints and squeals evilly in trees,  
That follows and faces the fleeing leaves,  
That with hag hands hugs the hooked hawk down,  
That hammers like rams' heads the humped body,  
And that stamps flat like stallions the shaking  
Flaking acres of grass—wind nine times named,  
And by these wordy welts nine times inflamed  
In mind—O mount now and mightily suck  
Up all rooted breath out of the rotted mouth  
Of man, collapse his plots and exploits, pluck  
Every gut taut with terror, like weed  
Tugged tight in withdrawing wave, and heedless  
In high hangars hoard one blast, pack one breath.

Then fall, walled wind, all welded and one, clap  
Wieldy water, scap, and valley gap  
Together, and detach man from his map;  
O wind, have no pity on the city  
With buttery motto and lean dole-line  
Like old tapeworm in its intestined street,  
Or on the foreign laughter of those who boot  
Through orchard pasted underfoot with fruit,  
Seek, suck, sack such, in each socket set tooth,  
High over hoardings hurl, and all ways spill,  
Hug the elbowing horde, hard under hill  
Huddle hare and hound, let lion and lamb  
Lump panic-struck, yoke in one choking hold  
Victor and victim, rock trigger and target.  
And O, halt our hates, file flat our flights,  
With stiff pointed finger stuff and stifle



Every gaping gun and pouting rifle;  
Pour over our floors and frontiers and leave  
Pavement and field clean and ceiling clear,  
And man, like Noah afloat in his ark  
On a single sea, looking for landmark,  
His heart's scope not yet shrunken into  
Private and poisonous pools of feeling.

Alas! Aeolus will not listen to  
Our lot. No upright God angry and stiff  
Will suddenly come turning somersaults  
Of mercy and cartwheels of leniency  
Toward us Noahs. Nor will words rock or wring,  
Or invocation sting. At our appeal  
No pulse will leap up like a bell-clapper  
Proclaiming peace. To us no Nereus will  
Rise from the ring of the sea like a rod,  
His hair set and salty as dulse, bringing  
Succour and promise. So spare your prayers:  
There are no interlopers in our fate.  
Be sure of this, that in peace or war, we  
Are where we are because of what we are:  
No censor can excerpt, or scissor-snip  
Excise this salient sentence from our lives.  
O easy and peaceful were those days when  
Our hopes bowled on before us like hoops,  
And our biddable purposes pedalled  
Slowly on rolling gradients of reason  
And reform. Fools! in our stinking ditches  
War was born, and grew gigantic legs that  
Suddenly kicked the ground away like a frog  
From under us all. For that is how  
The world moves, not with meant and maintained pace  
Toward some hill-horizon or held mood,  
But in great jags and jerks, probed and prodded  
From point on point of anger, exploded  
By each new and opposed touch. So War came,  
The late and urgent agent of Change, not  
Of Chance. So will it always come to wake  
The deep sleepers. See how its sudden hands

Now garter and grow round us like quicksands  
Here in these islands. O awake! awake!  
And let us like the trapped intrepid man  
Who on prairie hears the holocaust roar  
And sees his horizons running to meet him  
In mutinous flames, while the still grasses fill  
With rills of refugees, let us calmly  
Stand now to windward, and here at our feet  
Stooping, light fires of foresight that will clean  
And clear the careless ground before us  
Of all the dry and tindery increment  
Of privilege. So will that other Fate  
Arriving find no hold within our state,  
And we on our ringed ground its roar will wait  
Freely. Awake! before it is too late.

## TERENCE HEYWOOD

### CUL-DE-SAC

Nothing grows in Callus Crescent.  
The pollard limes' smutcht forks  
are their own crutches; clipt privets  
choke in the clogged air, their stomata  
unable to get the smoke out of their nostrils.

O this adhesive hate, stifling  
all life, smearing the furled green  
and the clean world searing! O these  
effusive efforts fuddled, made ineffective  
by the indiscriminate use of spiritual contraceptives.

This is a cul-de-sac. The houses,  
behind whose blinds are lopped lives,  
stare back without seeing.  
These being the wrong premises,  
how can we ever reach the right conclusion?

# TOM HARRISSON

## THE POPULAR PRESS?

‘What could possibly take the place of newspapers? There surely cannot be any sane man or woman in Britain who would argue that the Ministry of Information or its near-relation, the B.B.C., have so far offered a serious alternative to the newspapers in conveying information.’—FRANK OWEN in *Picture Post*, 24.8.40.

### I.—HOW THE PRESS BEHAVES

FRANK OWEN is intelligent, efficient, radical, sincere, a first-class journalist and editor of the *Evening Standard*. And he is being orthodox Fleet Street when he asks himself a question and neatly answers by suggesting that there *cannot* be anyone in his right mind who would give an answer unfavourable to his opinion of the press. In that case, I must come to the reluctant conclusion that for every one person who is sane in this country, three are certifiable. Recent investigations by reputable Market Research organizations have shown generally around three to one who have more confidence, for instance, in B.B.C. news than in newspaper news. Several ‘serious alternatives’ to the newspapers are developing. At this stage it is only necessary to underline the dismissive, even abusive, attitude of the editor towards anyone who suggests the press is not tops. This journalistic disregard for commonplace feeling about the press is having considerable influence on the course of the war, and the future channels of information.

The technique of dubbing anybody who disagrees a half-wit, bastard or outcaste, is familiar enough. Persil’s latest effort, now decorating the hoardings, plays up to the theme excellently—a theme that must be near the worst neurosis of so many of the sort of people who want to be different, and struggle unceasingly to compensate for feeling inferior in childhood. Persil provides three boys walking. Two have lovely white shirts. But the shirt of the third is grey. The two grin, the one glum. The two are passing a remark about him, to his misery: **SOMEBODY’S MOTHER ISN’T USING PERSIL YET:** This is the tragic theme which survives through peace and war.

The terrifying, rigorous routine of crowding industrial civilization, limited liabilities and unlimited social emulation. Rigorously exploited by B.O. and Frank Owen, in a ceaseless attempt to make the mass of people consume your product and enlarge your pull. But sauce or soap interests ask you only to change your habit, not your mind. The press has largely sought to change our minds. It is clearly crucial, then, to know in what direction they work for change, why, and how far they succeed. Look, for instance, at the way the biggest and most powerful newspaper, the *Daily Express*, regards its public, as reflected in its leaders:

‘Should we fight a foreign war to protect our commercial interests? . . . The answer to-day is NO! The public is educated and informed on these matters.’ (29.7.38.)

To its informed and educated public, the *Express* announces (16.9.38):

‘The only criticism likely to be levelled at Mr. Chamberlain will come from the extreme Left. Whatever terms he brings back from Berlin the Left will cry that peace has been bought at the price of honour. That is crooked thinking.’

The crooks took a lot of pasting in the months to follow, and Lord Beaverbrook himself (he owns the *Express* and *Standard*) had some bad words for them on several occasions, e.g.:

‘It is wicked and untrue to accuse Britain, your own country, of selling Czechoslovakia or of deserting France.’ (22.9.38.)

Lord Beaverbrook has always been a keen advocate of what would appear to be direct punishment for those who disagree with his newspapers, e.g.:

‘You should resent and punish those who say that Britain has broken faith in Palestine or in Czechoslovakia either for that matter.’ (18.10.38.)

Sometimes his papers have gone so far as to advocate mass revolution in support of editorial opinion, e.g.:

‘The public should revolt against the food rationing system, that dreadful and terrible iniquity which some of the Ministers want to adopt. There is no necessity for the trouble and expense of rationing merely because there may be a shortage

of this or that inessential commodity. Why should old women be forced to wait here and there before the shops for their supplies? This form of folly is difficult and almost impossible to understand . . . ' (21.11.39.)

The public, of course, were thoroughly in favour of rationing, by a large majority, and the arguments put forward day after day in the Beaverbrook press had not the slightest visible effect, because they seldom bore any relation to the realities of the situation of butter and sugar supplies which faced the car-less portion of the population. At a time (October–November, 1939) when evidence from every part of the country frequently proved a break-down in butter and sugar supplies, the Beaverbrook press continued day after day to pretend the supplies were adequate and adequately distributed, and that therefore there was no need for rationing. Indeed, by November 15 the *Express* had worked itself up to obliterating all rational distribution schemes and an editorial advised:

'The Ministry of Food should be abolished. Distribution of food should revert to normal lines. The Ministry are responsible for most of the troubles of the country.'

It is necessary to ask by what right individuals or individual newspapers (and in effect the National Press is mainly controlled by five families) can thus flout majority feeling and at the *same time* claim to represent it and to be working for the public interest. It would be possible to fill a whole vista of *Horizons* with examples of the way in which the press distorts public opinion to support editorial argument. (Those who are interested to follow the matter further, will find a full analysis in the next number of *Political Quarterly*.) For my present purpose it is enough to examine carefully the claim that the press is the Fifth Estate of liberty, a voice from the people and to the people. Many times in the past three years it has rebuked the House of Commons as not adequately representing the people, particularly when M.P.s have shown in a division that they disagree with an editorial argument. It is worth recalling one perfect example which combines this rebuke with the whole press process I am trying to describe. When Vernon Bartlett contested the seemingly impossible Bridgwater constituency against the usual Conservative candidate (this one a god-son



of Halifax), the press had good opportunities for their usual generalizations about the people.

The *Evening Standard's* whole editorial on polling day was entitled 'THE VERDICT OF THE COUNTRY'.

'There are indications that a number of Government's supporters in the House, even outside the small avowedly rebel Tory camp, have an uneasy feeling, that, in the public estimation, the racial extremism of the Nazi leaders . . . dealt a fatal blow to the policy of appeasement.

'This leads to the conclusion that a Government which has pledged itself to that policy may already be regarded by the electorate as guilty of a serious miscalculation, or even that the odium which Herr Hitler has incurred this month may attach itself in part to a Prime Minister who has made a "better understanding" with Germany his cardinal aim.

'That such views should be entertained even by a minority of Mr. Chamberlain's supporters is *evidence of the aptitude of Members of Parliament on occasion to lose touch with the feelings of the country.*'

How does the leader-writer of the *Standard* himself keep in 'touch with the feelings of the country', so that he can correct the M.P.s.? His editorial winds on tendentiously, until it reaches Bridgwater, when it says:

'The results will shed further light on the present trend of public opinion. Already, however, it is clear from the impressive Government majorities . . . that the electorate has *no inclination whatever* to withdraw the endorsement which was given to Mr. Chamberlain's policy of seeking peace and European reconciliation.

'In this issue the *by-election voter* is showing a sound sense of realism. . . .

'In the pursuit . . . of his aims—appeasement abroad; secure defences at home—Mr. Chamberlain has lost no whit of the confidence reposed in him by his countrymen. So far as foreign policy is concerned, the *Government's position is safe from any challenge.*'

Next day, every paper front-paged the result, the *Standard* as:

BRIDGWATER SHOCK FOR GOVERNMENT

C

It must have been rather a shock for the *Standard*, too. For Bartlett had made a turnover of 12,900 votes. At the previous by-election, the Conservative had a majority of 10,569; now Bartlett won by 2,332.

No wonder that evening the *Standard* devoted its whole editorial to explaining things all over again, under title 'BRIDGWATER', admitting 'The size of the Opposition majority can almost be described as sensational', and ending up on a different note from the previous evening, urging a general election, but still wishfully thinking on: 'The *Evening Standard* believes that, despite Bridgwater, Mr. Chamberlain still commands a wide and full measure of support from the British people.'

Right up until he actually had to resign, nothing would make the Beaverbrook press really admit that Chamberlain was not The Leader, commanding unity of the whole nation, etc., etc.

Why do newspapers do this sort of thing? What stops them from telling the truth and playing the genuine public game? Why can't they reflect opinion honestly, or instruct and guide it by telling the truth? The answer is simple enough: the press does not exist to serve the public until *after* it has served its shareholders. Journalists can't help it; the popular press is a business concern, and the shareholders can only be served if the public are satisfied and the advertisers are satisfied. And the advertisers can only be satisfied if people are buying and spending, and people won't buy or spend much if they don't feel good and fairly calm and optimistic. As Sir William Crawford said at the Annual Dinner of the Institute of Incorporated Practitioners in Advertising (1939): 'Advertising is only successful when it secures the confidence of the public . . . we seek all the time to build up confidence.' That is the key to the whole story of the press and the decline of press prestige in the past five years. In a world which has provided unprecedented material for pessimism and unpleasantness, the press has often been unable to face up to the facts, and has continually over-emphasized optimism and consequently underplayed reality. But as, in the end, reality overtakes even the optimist, the ordinary newspaper reader, he has suffered a long series of disillusionments, a painful pilgrimage of finding that the facts of to-morrow are likely to contradict the press forecasts of to-day. Most of the press has

sought all that time to keep up that delightful abstraction, public confidence.

Sorel (a suitable citation for our times) once remarked that there was popular aversion to every pessimistic idea. The press has accepted this truism and elevated it to a philosophy; the result has been a considerable contribution towards the smugness, slowness, complacency and apathy which has marked the British story in the past five years and which nearly enabled Hitler to close *Horizon* just as it was getting good and thinking of permitting me to write for it! Let us examine just a few specimens of the way in which the press has sought to exercise its responsibility and leadership. First a few examples from the *Evening Standard*; I should say here that I think this is quite the most sincere of London newspapers, and in general I am only quoting from the Beaverbrook press because it tends to be *less* prejudiced, *less* confined to one line of thought than other sections, and more genuinely interested in the common touch; moreover, Beaverbrook is now a member of the War Cabinet and it is of particular significance to trace the influence of his organs during the years in which we were getting into the mess he is now getting us out of. *Evening Standard* editorials repeatedly stressed the complete confidence of the country in Mr. Chamberlain, often with the usual technique of faking public opinion, e.g.:

‘Meanwhile, opinion in this country is unanimous in having confidence in one thing—that Mr. Chamberlain and his Ministers can be trusted to follow unswervingly two aims: peace and the defence of Britain’s interests and country.’  
(14.9.38.)

Or:

‘The attacks which are being delivered against the Prime Minister by his political opponents are unfair and malicious. They will be so assessed by the great majority of Mr. Chamberlain’s fellow countrymen.’ (23.9.38.)

On the last day of October, 1938, a leader proclaimed:

‘It is this (Mr. Chamberlain’s) happy conviction of faith in Herr Hitler’s sincerity and honesty which offers the key to European peace. It is a conviction which the *Evening Standard* shares.’

This happy conviction was no whit shaken when Hitler marched into Prague:

‘It is a controversy which in any event does not concern the people of Britain . . . London should make up its mind that 1939 is going to be a year of peace and pleasure.’

The mind of London (I doubt if even Dali could give us a picture of this astonishing abstraction) was further encouraged in a leader next day:

‘There is nothing to show that the disruption of Czechoslovakia was planned or fomented by the Reich as part of a pre-conceived strategy of eastward advance . . . As far as can be seen at this stage, the end of federal Czechoslovakia does not increase the risk of general hostilities in Europe, or indeed put any fresh obstacles in Mr. Chamberlain’s path.’

Having thus handed a bouquet to Hitler’s good intentions, next day’s leader was able to go a stage further with:

‘Czechoslovakia has ceased to exist, but the cold fact is that it could never hope to exist. It was a ramshackle state . . . We must not delude ourselves into supposing that this . . . in any way brings war nearer to Europe . . . It gives us *in fact a better chance* of peace in the future.’

Even on the first day of 1940 there was a silver lining in the *Standard*’s leader:

‘It is a fair prophecy that this conflict will retain its chief characteristic as a siege war.’

But, as I have said, the *Evening Standard* does less of this sort of thing than most other papers. The *Daily Express*, which has the largest circulation of any daily in the world, is fairer game. First, to remind, an editorial example of dismissing the doubter as cracked:

‘Hitler wants an air pact with us, and that’s going to anger only the foolish who will cry “No truck with the Dictator!”’  
(29.7.38.)

With the rhythm of the primitive tom-tom this leader of public opinion had orchestrated the theme set by Lord Beaverbrook (1.9.38.):

THERE WILL BE NO EUROPEAN WAR

The whole range of journalistic intelligence was brought in to convince millions of readers that they need not bother their heads about a coming war: for instance:

‘From these two battlefields (Spain and China) what conclusion can we derive. Plainly this: That there is not, nor can be, such a thing as a short and decisive war between great nations.

‘These are the reasons why the *Daily Express* repeats over and over again that this nation will not be involved in a struggle this year nor next year either.’ (10.9.38.)

With a Southland lullaby the educated and informed citizen was cradled through the trauma of a crumbling civilization:

‘The rest of the nation (i.e. excluding the crooked critics of Munich) can rejoice, lift up their heads and voices in song because we are delivered from the dread shadow of war, secure in the knowledge that Britain will be drawn into no European conflict this year or next year either . . . The *Daily Express* has been justified by the event.’ (21.9.38.)

Sometimes the statements are almost violently definite, e.g.:

‘There is no danger of war between Britain and Germany. That peril does not exist, for the good and sufficient reason that there is at present nothing at issue between the two countries which could provide a ground for conflict . . . Nor is there any trace of a desire by Germany to pursue us.’ (17.11.38.)

This editorial went on to say that Chamberlain should not stop appeasing, and that here ‘the *Daily Express* takes up an unpopular attitude . . . but our duty is plain. Our judgment is sound. And our advice should be taken by our readers’. A fortnight before war was declared an editorial told these readers ‘no false optimism will be found in these columns’; next day (24.8.39) an old friend came to the rescue: ‘Time is on the side of peace.’ And here are some splash headlines on the days immediately after the declaration of war:

POLES BEAT GERMANS BACK INTO GERMANY (4.9.)

POLES BOMB BERLIN (6.9.)

ATTACK ON SIEGFRIED WEAK SPOT (7.9.)

NAZI ARMY TIRED OUT (12.9.)



While on the 13th the paper's military correspondent summed up: 'The situation in Poland seems to be fairly stable.'

This spirit is maintained right through to the collapse of France—exaggeration of minor successes, suppression of reversals until the last possible moment. Headline on October 18: HITLER FACES BIG CABINET SPLIT (this is a regular feature during the period). Next day: HITLER IS A BUNDLE OF NERVES. Two days later in an editorial: HITLER IS WORRIED. Two days after that:

'Hitler, trapped and desperate, to-day called all his leaders together for a hush-hush super war council to help him make up his mind on his next step in the war.'

All through the winter, the *Express* and other papers built up a picture of Hitler's hopeless indecision and feeble hold on his colleagues and people. They did have a cold spell late in October, and an editorial then (27.10.39) advised: 'Always over estimate your adversary's strength, never under-estimate it.' But five days later the *Express* had recovered from this appalling fit of depression and swung back into life with a headline: NAZI GENERALS DON'T BELIEVE IN THE BLITZKRIEG. And a couple of days later a headline: HITLER ASKS DUCE 'SAVE ME FROM FRIEND STALIN'. While the day after that: HITLER PUTS RIBBENTROP ON THE SPOT. By mid November confidence was winning smashing blows for Britain: NAZI GENERALS IN REVOLT:—REFUSE TO INVADE DUTCH:

And even in the darkest hour, on May 6th, Lord Beaverbrook was ready to come forward with a signed article:

'There can be no possible ground for the depression and gloom that exist over the events in Norway . . . Our cities cannot now be bombed with any prospect of success . . . We may hope, with some confidence, that London and other densely peopled areas in Britain will not be bombed at all.'

(While I write, the windows rattle—soon the siren will go?)

What confidence, what courage the *Express* reader could get each morning. How helpful to read (4.3.40):

'British sympathy with the Italians is very strong. Our understanding with them is very firm. Mussolini and the Italian people have been friendly with us for a long time.'

Or, a signed article by Lord Beaverbrook (15.3.40), entitled:

DISPEL THE GLOOM, which assures 'British resources can be mobilized swiftly and completely against any invasion of Norway by any foreign country.'

And how nice for the advertisers when ten days before, in another signed effort, the readers of the *Express* were told: 'There is a wrong notion about that profits should be limited in war-time.' Could anything be more satisfactory than to read on April 15, in an editorial:

'The German Führer has stirred up a battlefield on which the opposing forces are too big, too strong, too powerful for this wretched man. The end of the story cannot be far off . . . The isolated German forces at Narvik have had a foretaste of what will happen to Germans at Trondheim and Bergen before long.'

The whole story of the press treatment of Narvik is worth a pamphlet on its own. Maybe the Germans got the foretaste. We got the backtaste and showed the badtaste. Here, as in every case quoted, events have subsequently proved that the editorial and news angle had been, to put it mildly, over confident. They thickly smeared their readers in hope, told them all was well, and poured unrationed marge into their ears so that they couldn't hear the shell even when it was whining straight towards them. When, coming round from the shrapnel wounds, the patient realizes what happened, he doesn't feel so good about this particular form of A.R.P. or Moral Re-armament.

I am suggesting that the press has certain compulsions, partly economic and partly intellectual, towards painting the rosy side of the picture. But in consequence it has powerfully reduced ordinary people's awareness of the grave dangers and threatening times through which they have been moving. This, in turn, has led to an appalling mass apathy, which has only been overcome with the greatest difficulty and by the most vigorous efforts of a Government which was scarcely foreseen by the press—Churchill (first man who has really got a hold on British public opinion in the past twenty years), Bevin, Morrison, etc. It is particularly illuminating now to recall the Beaverbrook press's attitude to the crucial Ministry of Supply under Chamberlain. This regularly received editorial praise, seldom so generously given to Government Departments, e.g.:

'Our Minister of Supply (Burgin) is doing a good job, and the *Daily Express* is happy to say so . . . There will be no shell scandal this time.' (11.11.)

'Mr. Burgin began the war with plenty of critics. And now there are many to praise him. He is the big find in this Ministry.' (18.11.)

'The *Daily Express* has confidence in Mr. Burgin, and believes that he has done his job well and thoroughly . . . His reputation stands high.' (13.12.)

But maybe at that time the *Express* wasn't setting a very high standard, for it celebrated the New Year by an editorial attacking the idea of building up a large army, and inciting its readers in the familiar way:

'All is not lost. The will of the public can prevail. Let the public show their determination to resist the proposal to build this enormous army. Then registration may take place, but calling up will be postponed.' (1.1.40.)

It's not my job to pass a judgment on all this. I have merely tried to describe and present a few of the facts. Several other great newspapers would have given fuller and richer material. I want to be honest. And I know that I am in for trouble from some of my press friends; indeed, this article as good as certifies me insane anywhere between Aldwych and St. Paul's. I'll take the risk. Someone's got to. This is not a post mortem of recrimination, but post mortem for resurrection! How on earth does the press think that it can get away with this sort of thing week in and week out? Does it really believe that its readers can't remember anything? Can it afford any more to fool around with the future of ordinary people? Commonsense alone would suggest what investigation proves, namely that people do remember inconsistencies and are affected by sudden show ups. Yet it is firmly implanted in Fleet Street jargon that the public have a short memory. Several editors have expressed as much contempt for, and as little understanding of, ordinary people as the most reactionary general or Tory peer. Others, like Owen, have a genuine interest in their subject matter, the people. But even so, it is mixed with some extraordinary dogmas which seem to have become revered ritual utterances, handed down in apostolic succession from Northcliffe. For instance, I have yet to meet a newspaper man who doubts that the press is the major form of

influence on public opinion, that it is thoroughly respected as well as read, and that it is an unshakeable fixture in the forefront of British life. Let us, therefore, examine this situation.

## II.—HOW THE READER REACTS

Mass-observation has been studying public feeling about the press for three years. Charles Madge and I began M.-O. largely because of the situation when the press gave the first big knock to its own prestige, i.e., when the Simpson crisis blew up and the public found major news had been withheld from them for months. I believe that the brief summary of some results which I give here is accurate; it is based on a full length survey (financed by responsible private and commercial interests), which we intend to publish presently.

Since the Simpson crisis there have, as already indicated, been many cases in which the press has proved itself either an inaccurate prophet or an inadequate informant. Even in 1937, when Mass-observation investigations began, it was still quite common to find country people saying they believed a thing because it was in the newspaper. This type of comment is now practically extinct, and has been largely replaced by comment, of which the following is typical selection:

‘I am very wary about the news. I always look at both sides of it.’

‘I am getting rather sceptical.’

‘The newspapers have sadly deteriorated these last few years.’

‘Can’t believe all you see in the papers, but the wireless is true.’

‘I think what we get is mainly truthful, but it’s what we don’t get.’

Such remarks, of which we have many thousands of examples, come from all classes and areas. The war and the subsequent series of events have come as the biggest shock to those who had confidence in the press as an opinion-forming source. In a survey undertaken during the week before war was declared, one person in eight looked on the press mainly favourably and only rather over a half were strongly critical, e.g.:

‘My son reads ’em to me, but he thinks they’re a lot of paper talk.’

D

‘They are just giving us what they think. They’re suppressing all the necessary facts. They treat us like a pack of school kids with no intelligence.’

‘A lot of boloney. Ought to be stopped.’

By the beginning of May, after the real facts of the Norwegian campaign had exploded, a particularly vivid period of press confidence-building, two-thirds were sceptical or critical about the press, and especially about press news. At this time, 37 per cent of those discussing the day’s news made spontaneous and specific antagonistic remarks about its treatment. Another survey was undertaken in mid-July. This time the press scored just above one in ten of comments as favourable. The main grumbles against the press were in, roughly, the following order of frequency:

that it was uninformative,  
less informative than the B.B.C.,  
unreliable,  
contradictory,  
censored,  
that it exaggerated the news,  
too propagandist,  
too much war news,  
uninteresting.

Frequently, and spontaneously, comparison was made with the B.B.C., and wherever this concerned news or the interpretation of news, the comparison was overwhelmingly unfavourable to the press. Subsequently, this survey was extended into detailed attitudes, which, among other things, showed one-fifth who said that they trusted the papers less than before the war. Illuminating in this connection is a ballot which we undertook through our nation-wide panel of voluntary observers. The first ballot was undertaken in September, 1938; the second in September, 1939—the third will be made this month. People were asked to mark in order of importance those channels of information which they felt had the largest influence upon them. Newspapers came first (easy first, more than twice as powerful as the next channel), in 1938; they came second, a bad second, in 1939. They have fallen further since.

Now no one would suggest that these facts give an *absolute* answer to the influence of the press. But they give a comparative



answer of importance. The methods, investigators and persons studied are constant. The research had no political bias or vested interest angle. A distinct trend, both quantitative and qualitative, towards increased criticism of, and scepticism about, press news and comment is unmistakable. In many cases it emerged that people actually disliked the papers they took regularly. A neurotic tension towards the newspaper, something like the tension many feel about their cigarette smoking, was frequently revealed. It would, of course, be ridiculous to suggest that antagonism against news and interpretation of news has yet developed so far that people are fed up with the whole idea of newspapers. The newspapers have, by habit and by their own energetic propaganda, become almost a social necessity in many classes of society. The papers provide an agenda for the day's conversations; but the agenda seldom occupies more than one per cent of the day's conversations in normal times. In war, outside events become relatively more important, and the compulsion towards being in touch with what is going on even greater. Nevertheless, an authoritative survey made by an advertising concern in December, 1939, shows that there were still more than a quarter of the population who did not read any morning newspaper, either national or provincial. Here are two typical quotations from people describing their wartime newspaper habits:

1. '(I read the newspaper) largely to find out as far as possible what is happening. Sometimes I am so much in despair about the possibility of doing this from newspapers, that I cannot bear to read them for a few days. I find, though, that if I am cut off from newspapers for a short time, I get very worried and jumpy.'

2. 'I read newspapers to know what is happening in the world, and what opinions are current. Newspapers are supposedly produced to serve that purpose, but they do their job very badly indeed and are getting worse. Within my experience there has been a marked deterioration, and if this should prove progressive I can foresee a day when I shall decline to buy a newspaper at all . . . The day may come when one will be forced either to rely upon dearer and much less convenient ways of obtaining news, or to prefer remaining in ignorance to being consistently fooled.'

I could amplify endlessly quotations and statistics to show how far gone a huge part of the population now are in what Denys Thompson has well described as 'reading between the lines'. It has almost become a national game. To get your morning paper, to read through the important news, and try to decide what's true and what's false, what's left out and what's exaggerated. Fascinating are the descriptions of people, of the methods they employ to try and check the news—pathetically simple methods sometimes.

Of course, the influence of the mass press is still immense. It provides information on cookery, sport, betting, astrology, fashion, films, commodities, stocks and shares, clothes and gardens, jokes and cartoons, for a penny a day. And while people are suspicious of its news and editorials, they are still naive in comparison with the scepticism which would be justified by inside knowledge. But while they are often not sufficiently sceptical about news, (partly because Sorel's remark is true), they are now definitely sceptical about editorial comment, which is something rather less elusive to the reader. And this is where the real decline in press prestige has come. Editorials, *direct* attacks and arguments in the mass dailies, now have extraordinarily little influence in stirring up any feeling among the mass of people, unless these feelings are already in existence. Repeated studies of the effect of press campaigns (e.g. for Empire Free Trade, against the Co-ops, rationing, Duff Cooper) have shown a negligible success for the press and much public criticism of the campaign from ordinary people; but the press has a success where it stimulates *private opinions* and brings them out into the open (e.g., 'intern them all').

In the best book so far written about 'Public Opinion' (McGraw-Hill, 1939), an American called Albigh says: 'The (American) press has failed to direct its readers in numerous crisis situations. But it retains an enormous influence over its readers in their day-to-day decisions on issues about which they are *not* aroused.' The same is now true for Britain. Aldous Huxley once observed that the power of commercial advertising lay in the fact that it dealt with matters of no importance, on which no strong opinion existed. The power of the press in this country shows every sign of becoming limited in this way—unless editors rapidly revise their estimate of the public interest,

intelligence and memory. Unfortunately, the press shows few signs of being aware of this trend. I have several times put the arguments of this article to newspaper friends of mine who are highly intelligent. I haven't any axe to grind in the matter, and I am genuinely concerned at what I believe to be a serious deterioration in the prestige of the press, with possible consequences for the whole structure of democracy. But the mere suggestion of some of the points made here have, on several occasions, roused my press friends to a fury of rejection. That terrible Fleet Street insult, YOU'RE IN FAVOUR OF CENSORSHIP, I SUPPOSE, has been hurled across the Café Royal tables. Yet it's vitally important they *should* face up to the facts, not once more gloss it all over with lashings of confidence and complacency. The other times that has been suicide for us; this time it will be suicide for them. It's time some of these editors and journalists came on a little mass-observation tour, got down to the brass tacks of talking and listening with miners and fishermen, dockers and weavers, about the press—and without the people knowing of any special interest existing on the part of the listener. I remember an article in *World's Press News* which was significant because of the points which the author (an eminent journalist) thought it significant to mention about the subject matter of the article, Frank Owen, of whom it was written:

'Since being exalted to the editor's chair he has not changed; he *still* walks with old reporter friends and has his glass of beer and friendly arguments; he keeps in touch with people and events, and knows what Fleet Street and the man-in-the-street are thinking . . . He has acquired all the best traditions of the profession, but is at the same time inherently class-conscious.'

Other editors use a different technique for keeping in touch with that fellow, the man-in-the-street (he must be very bored of being out there by now). For instance, the brothers Cudlipp—Percy (Editor of the *Daily Herald*) and Hugh (Editor of the *Sunday Pictorial*)—as approvingly described by Hannen Swaffer (29.8.40.) :

Being with Hugh Cudlipp is often embarrassing.

Once, when he was arguing with his brother Percy in the Strand, he said, 'We'll ask the man-in-the-street'.

‘Here, you!’ he yells, clutching a small man by his shoulders, ‘what do you think of it?’

Lucky he chose a small man. Anyway, I don’t think Hugh and I would tour well together. I invite Frank Owen. There is only one thing that worries me about my invitation. Before then, may not the bombs have interfered with all our plans. I mean, last night in — it was really quite nasty. But then, I pull myself together, and over me steals the old quiet confidence. I turn once more to the treasure trove of memory. From the pages of the mind’s scrapbook I pick an article by Frank Owen, written before Munich, boosting our anti-aircraft guns. What infinite consolation I derive from his sentence—what consolation for Warsaw, Rotterdam, Birmingham, too—‘We have got the bomber under control at last’ (19.8.38). At last—oh blast, there’s the scrunching of bombs falling again. Soon the siren will go? . . .

ROY FULLER

AUGUST 1940

I

Charing Cross: where trains depart for the bombardment  
And the leave-taking is particularly ardent;  
The obelisk in the court-yard is streaming with lime,  
The doves are crying in the dusk, and Time

*Says: I am money, I am all these people,  
The quality in light which changes to purple  
When goods have been left with the owner of the mill  
And the authority is his to sell.*

*I wipe my fingers on the hurrying faces,  
And implant the wish to be in different places.  
I am Too Late, I am the trees which grow  
In everyone and blossom pale and grey.*

## 2

The edges of the country are fraying with  
Too much use; the ports are visited by wrath  
In the shapes of the metal diver and the dart  
With screaming feathers and explosive heart,

And the ships are guilty of a desire to return  
To land, to three mile pits and the moulding urn.  
England no longer is shaped like a begging dog,  
Its shape is the shape of a state in the central bog,

With frontiers which change at the yawn of a tired ruler;  
At last the push of time has reached it; realer  
Today than for centuries, England is on the map  
As a place where something occurs, as a spring-board or trap.

Oh what is to happen? Does that depend on Time  
Alone? Will change of country eventually come  
As slow erosion by the wind of mountains,  
And of love as the green-slimed Cupid of the fountain?

Only people and not places are able to resist  
Time for a space, to race their daily ghost  
In the projectile of violent change: the power  
Is in the people to pool their collective hours,

And reply to Time: *You are not all the people,  
You are the weak man underneath the steeple,  
You are the exploiter and appropriator,  
The hurt philosopher who murmurs Later,*

*You are all those who assisted death, who weighted  
The curve with war and a system of hatred.  
You are condemned as a reward or lash,  
As an explosion, as a fear or wish.*

## 3

*Will you depart now? Will you become a place?  
There is really no penalty, there may be peace.  
Will you add yourself in the calculation of  
The perimeter, the coast-line lost to love?*

The third voice says this; it is almost our own.  
The voice of pigeons as they drop from stone,  
From the cornices of banks, the premises  
Of rings and trusts, from all betrayed promises;

The voice of wings attractive to the cripple,  
The soothing voice of tobacco pipe and nipple,  
Of introvert ambition which Icarus heard,  
The voice of the weeping and isolated bird.

ROBERT MELVILLE

## ‘THE TEMPTATION’ OF HIERONYMUS BOSCH

HIERONYMUS BOSCH lived in seclusion at s’Hertogenbosch, and his work bears the stamp of the recluse: he was morbidly pre-occupied with the baseness of man, and his pictorial language was encumbered by complicated private symbols. His paintings of subjects which do not present an opportunity of analysing a state of mind are marred by the intrusion of symbols which are merely riddles without answers, and even the lovely ‘St. Christopher’ in the Boymans Museum is rendered gratuitously disquieting by misplaced ambiguities. But fortunately he had a wonderful gift for finding subjects of public interest which yielded to his highly introspective treatment, and his several paintings of the humiliation of Christ and the temptation of St. Anthony are infused with a vivid and searching analysis of his own experience.

No theme could have been more suited to Bosch than the Temptation of St. Anthony, for his own solitariness enabled him to give the spiritual problems of the hermit an autobiographical poignancy. He painted three versions: the famous hinged altarpiece at Lisbon, a side panel of a triptych of hermits at Venice, and a small oil on wood in the Prado. In the order I have named them they are representative of his development as an artist and provide us with evidence of his struggle for lucidity in the interpretation of a theme and of his progress towards a heroic self-discipline.

In the Lisbon version he was not concerned with the problem of how to depict St. Anthony's resistance to temptation; he concentrated upon the task of devising symbols of evil which would be horrible and frightening and yet plausible as temptations; and by means of an unconstrained visualization of metamorphoses and shameless alliances he succeeded in using an elusive but effective language of sexual incitement.

There is no doubt that this clutter of zoomorphs, human fragments, animated vessels, dead trees, ruins, burning houses and bits of cloth carried a host of subsidiary meanings which can no longer be elucidated, but I do not think we need lament their loss, for what remains, and perhaps operates more effectively now than four hundred years ago, is the force with which even the most obscure item in this painting contributes towards the evocation of an atmosphere of obsession. This altar-piece is a kind of armed camp of analogies and kinæsthetic images, and the four representations of St. Anthony are prisoners. There is no escape for the hermit: wherever he is, he is hemmed in by his own desires, which have been rendered inordinate by repression.

In a side panel, there are two tableaux, set close to the hermit, which are of great significance. In one, a dead tree, pale and phosphorescent, rises out of a pool of shallow water, a cloth hanging from its branches is a diabolically makeshift tent. Behind the tree, an old woman is pouring a liquid into a drinking glass held by a man-frog adorned with enormous butterfly wings. The free hand of the man-frog drags aside, as if by accident, one of the folds of the hanging cloth. A horned monkey appears from under this fold, grasping a live fish which is transfixed by an arrow. Just inside the makeshift tent, revealed by the drawn-back fold, stands a naked woman; her feet are in the water, and she covers her pudenda with a hand; she is small and seemingly modest. But her nakedness is rendered importunate by her setting. In relation to her stillness the animated figures around her take on the attributes of attendants or sponsors; the piece of cloth flung over the dead tree creates an atmosphere of feverish haste; the floor of shallow water is a place in which to wallow.

St. Anthony has looked up from his book, but his face is turned away.

His attention has been drawn by the barker of another tableau. This barker is partly clothed in the uniform of a jester, but is naked



below the waist. He is blowing a long snaky horn from which another horn emerges, flaming at the mouth and dangling something moist and shapeless. Ostensibly, the set-piece is a symbol of gluttony. There is a round table half-covered by a white cloth, but it bears little in the way of food to tempt the hermit. This table has no legs; it is supported by the shoulders of a naked man and by the feet of a naked woman, who is lying on her back with her legs in the air. The man has one foot in an earthenware pot, and the woman wears a gauntlet and holds a sword. In these naked figures the lascivious pose has again been scrupulously avoided (the woman's position is purely gymnastic), but because of their perverse task and equally perverse paraphernalia their nakedness is provocative.

I have mentioned the most conspicuous nudes, and even these are small and unassuming and relegated to a side panel; nevertheless, if we consider them to be the actual objects of the hermit's desire—not forgetting that one of them is a male—the rest of the imagery assumes a curious coherence.

The image of a fish with another jammed into its mouth, depicted in the opposite panel, need not cease to remind us that big fishes proverbially eat little fishes, but its relevance to the sexual act is unmistakable; and if we take into consideration the utter abandonment with which even the most innocuous activity of the grotesques is conducted, it is legitimate to think of each act of riding, piercing, splitting, pouring and swallowing as being only seemingly a caprice.

That the male nude is an object of desire is sufficiently confirmed by many images scattered throughout the altar-piece. I need only mention the kneeling idiot whose raised buttocks form the entrance to a cottage, the ostrich-like bird with bejewelled hindquarters, the man with a dead branch in his anus, and the earthenware pot with a narrow mouth which forms the rear of a fantastic animal,—but I have noticed many more examples and do not consider myself more than averagely prurient.

The function of the drapery further demonstrates Bosch's confined intensity of purpose. He uses it less as a compositional device than as a suggestive accessory; these entanglements and trailings of cloth and the partial revelation of inhuman forms within its folds are pornographic abstractions. We note, too, that many creatures have adorned themselves with bits of lumber, and

dangle fortuitous objects from their beaks and snouts, and such images have an intimate connection with a kind of exhibitionism peculiar to the male.

But Bosch has not only reconstructed a state of mind; I think we are looking at an extremely detailed description of a particular moment presaging change. The mind has already surrendered and is in expectation of an act, and we are observing that moment which divides the mind's motion from the act, a dreadful moment of fear and trembling and eagerness. The hermit's mind resembles the burning house in the background, where demons float in the smoky glow like the ash of its consumed contents.

The device of representing the hermit twice in one panel is turned to particularly brilliant account as a description of the hermit's half-hearted desire to extricate himself. (An equally magnificent use of this pictorial device is to be found in Giovanni di Paolo's 'St. John the Baptist Entering the Wilderness'. We see St. John starting out with a light angelic step from the city and with the same exquisite poise entering into the darkness of the wilderness, and the sense of the irresistibility of goodness achieved by means of this double representation is one of the glories of Sienese art. The contrary effect is obtained in the Bosch panel: here, the device serves to express the irresistibility of evil.)

Two episodes from the hermit's story are illustrated. One of them depicts him being assisted by friends after the demons have been banished, but actually this episode functions as a flash of hopeless optimism, for the demons are not banished: St. Anthony and his friends are allowed no breathing space, no dignity; the images of obsession are in full play around them. This episode would need to have a panel to itself before it could become an adequate depiction of the hermit's release, but aesthetically the absence of the demons is unthinkable, for the panels are united by an intricate design composed of seething little scenes. All the same, if Bosch had been concerned to illustrate the hermit's story rather than describe a state of mind, a solution of the aesthetic problem would have been ready to hand. Bosch knew all the details of the story, and the chronicles of the hermit's life state that a ray of light from heaven scattered the demons. Surely a representation of demons retreating in disorder would have made a wonderful subject for Bosch? He chose instead to depict this aftermath of release under a scene parodying the convention

which allows a heavenly host to sit in the clouds, a scene in which the hermit has been raised up into the air but in which the demons are unspeakably triumphant.

The hermit's flight towards heaven is a kinæsthetic image and is dreamlike in its ineffectiveness. It is an imagined flight, and the ecstasy of the uprush is turned to account by his sensual cravings, for in this aerial situation we see him sprawled out and supported by demons. He is absorbed in the giddy sensation, given over utterly to an internal motion which began as an attempt to free himself. So, because they are together in one panel, these two episodes are momentary visions, engendered by self-pity. The composition perfectly assimilates the conception and no ray of light from heaven is allowed to disrupt the psychological realism.

The monsters which hurry forward in single file or move about in small groups suggest that we are witnessing protracted manoeuvres preceding an action. The aerial combats between monsters, so vehement and demonstrative, prove upon examination to be mere simulations or rehearsals of assault. The combatants appear to be awaiting the signal for complete abandonment. The signal could very well be the closing of the hermit's book; such an action at this moment would be catastrophic.

The major aerial combat occurs in the centre panel, and under it, in the very heart of the painting, Bosch has placed a most astonishing pictorial record of the physiological consequence of the hermit's obsession. A file of monsters appears to be still rapidly advancing although it has reached its destination beside the hermit; this rapid movement mingles with the slow enveloping movement of a woman who is passing a dish of wine to another and making it a pretext for pressing against St. Anthony,—and the interpenetration of quickness and slowness conveys a sense of the violent yet ponderous flow of the over-stimulated blood. Never has tumescence been more brilliantly depicted: St. Anthony is a quivering figure with a dry mouth and a damp skin, and is on the point of closing the book. Bosch's inordinate interest in images with a sexual significance has rendered a dialectic of good and evil impracticable. The resources of temptation are defined, but the resources of resistance are not in evidence.

At every moment of our inspection of the Lisbon altar-piece we are astonished by the ingenuity and realism, but disturbed by the absence of large and simple forms to carry the burden of pattern.

Bosch had to shift the emphasis before he could bring into play the hermit's resources against his own impulses.

In the Venice panel there is already a more satisfying pictorial unity. The burning house remains but is now not only a symbol but an integral part of the design; the darkness has deepened and the forms are lit only by the glare from this distant conflagration. The naked woman under the tree still elucidates the situation, but the number of grotesques has been very considerably reduced. Those that remain are familiar but no longer organized in groups. They are gathered into the foreground, and in the fitful light they caricature the scuttling little creatures of the countryside immersed in their nocturnal affairs. They are no less horrible than before, but they are separated one from another and so, like lonely hooligans, are less demonstrative; their only function now is to taint the atmosphere.

Although the hermit is depicted four times in the Lisbon version he is no larger than his tormentors and is quite overwhelmed. In the Venice panel the grotesques are diminutive and the hermit dominates the composition. This radical departure from the schema of the earlier work gives Bosch the opportunity of making the figure of the hermit much more expressive. St. Anthony is in the act of lowering a jug into the spring, but there is such weariness in the action that as a symbol of the ascetic life it assumes a melancholy significance. The pure cold water of the spring has lost its savour and its meaning. The action is not a retort to the grotesques; the hermit is simply observing a mechanical routine. And his eyes are closed: he knows that evil things are present, but there is no point in looking at them for he has seen them before, and there is even less point in outfacing them for they always return. He is not tense, he merely endures. He avoids falling into temptation, but there is no joy in abstinence. This treatment of the theme has some correspondence with several of his paintings of the Crowning with Thorns and the Bearing of the Cross. Christ is vanquished by the mockers; before their ferocity and obscene merriment He closes His eyes and stumbles along in a trance. (These remarks do not apply to the version of the Crowning with Thorns in the National Gallery. Here, Christ is triumphant.)

Bosch is now absorbed by the full implications of St. Anthony's

story but is deeply pessimistic: he can find no adequate answer to evil, cannot confirm St. Anthony's saintliness.

\* \* \* \*

The Madrid version is depicted in broad daylight, and is set in a delightful, orderly landscape. There is a stream in the foreground, a country house in the middle distance, and, farther off, the spires of village churches. Slender trees in full foliage are growing near the figure of the hermit, but the dead tree is there, too—with emptily clutching branches and a gaping hole at the base of its shiny barkless trunk. The naked woman and her attendants are gone, but where the grotesques were once perched there is now a projecting fragment of thatch, the eaves of a non-existent roof. With the bait gone, this disused trap is now a shelter for the hermit. He is crouching inside the hole, and leaning forward, pressing his full weight against a stick held between his folded hands. His mouth is set, and his eyes are staring but not fixed upon any of the objects of his concentration, which are scattered over the landscape. There is largeness and finality in the conception of this figure. It is not calm; in the simplification and solidity of its forms it has the attributes of calmness, but it is expressive of the utmost tension. (When looking at Bosch there is always the chance of being led into a vicarious experience of abnormal physical states, and it is perhaps worth recording that on one occasion while looking at this St. Anthony I found myself not only imitating his stare but engrossed in the sensations of a victim of lagophthalmia.) It is upon the morbid vitality of this depiction of the hermit that any account of the meaning of the picture must depend.

Some of the grotesques are walking towards the house, carrying ladders. Another working party has opened a distant gate, and the ladders and scaling irons of a group not within our view can be seen behind the hillock on which the hermit sits. A semi-human figure with long talons is in midstream, swimming towards the near bank. A creature wearing a large helmet and brandishing a knife is climbing the bank, and another, enclosed in a miniature castle, has reached the little pig lying beside the hermit and is about to attack it with a sledge-hammer. On the far side of the stream a heavily armoured group is improvising a bridge.

A grotesque from the earlier versions has crept into the picture

and is pouring wine from the vessel which forms its body, but there are no tumidities here, no soft and vulnerable parts: the technique of incitement has been dropped. Instead, we have the technique of intimidation, for these grotesques seem to be concerned to make the hermit believe that all these ‘secret’ preparations are the prelude to an attack against which he cannot hope to defend himself. It is an absurd little parade of armed might in a war of nerves.

They are husks, they are without effective substance, and at first sight they do not seem worthy of consideration as tempters; but we are confronted by a depiction of the hermit which is so powerful that we are compelled to consider him as a being with immense experience in outfacing temptation, and with a technique so highly developed that obvious temptations no longer hinder his meditations. It will be something extremely small and negligible that passes through the fine mesh of his expert resistance, and these creatures at least manage to make demands upon his precious time.

I have already mentioned that the hermit has a pig for a companion, but I have found no mention of this pig in the chronicles, and I am indebted to S. M. Bernadette, of St. Anne’s Convent, Birmingham, for bringing to my notice a medieval ballad on the subject translated by Rev. R. L. Gales and published in MacMillan’s *Teaching in Practice*. I quote a few of the couplets because they have some bearing on my reading of the picture:

Come, ye goblins small and big,  
We will kill the hermit’s pig.

While the good monk minds his book,  
We the hams will cure and cook.

While he goes down on his knees,  
We will fry the sausages.

While he on his breast doth beat,  
We will grill the tender feet.

While he David’s Psalms doth sing,  
We will all to table bring.

It seems possible to me that Bosch had in mind this very ballad, for the armed demons, the butchers, are converging not upon the

hermit but upon his little pig, his only companion, which is very still and sits very close to its master, sensing an uneasiness in the atmosphere.

In the two earlier versions the house in the background is already in flames, and we can only suppose that before painting the present version Bosch subjected this favourite image to a very keen examination. Here, the house is only threatened with destruction: we see the demons with ladders and scaling irons, the incendiaries, converging upon it, but never reaching it.

From one point of view these fantastic little butchers and incendiaries are dry and vestigial, and it might seem that Bosch is no longer deeply interested in such devices; from another approach they present the essence of all previous ingenuities, for quite clearly and precisely they are personifications of the destructive and murderous tendencies which are, perhaps, concomitants of the hermit's vocation; and if these are tendencies in Bosch also, he is no longer giving in to vicarious enjoyment of them, for we are witnesses of the frustration of the personifications in their struggle to complete one of these dark visions. Not one of these figures is out of the hermit's thoughts and not one is allowed to consummate a task, all are forced by his terrible concentration to exhibit their contemptible incompetence. But although he checks the vision of burning and slaughter which his impulses are striving to complete, there is a tragic consequence: this effort of the will can only effect a qualified mastery of the vision, not a banishment. He is both slave and master of his visions. This St. Anthony is the living image of his mysterious creator.

MARGARET GARDINER

## MEETING THE MASTER

THE letter said: 'Your brother writes that you will be in Florence. Do come and see us. You must take tram No. 16 in Via dei Pecori, just near the cathedral. Come to the very terminus—then walk on straight ahead uphill and don't turn till you see two cypresses, close together as two fingers. Take the road to the left there—dip



down in the little hollow—our house is the big square box on the crown of the hill. But let us know and we'll come at least part of the way to meet you, or, if you prefer, send the peasant with the little trap, the barrocino. He'll rattle you up in no time.'

She had read it many times and now, sitting in the tram, she read it again. She was solemn and excited; the whole of her life jostled in her throat to leap into expression. She was going to meet Lawrence, really going to meet him. She felt full and important. Lawrence! A person to whom one could talk, who knew and understood everything. The tram stopped with a jerk and she got out, screwing up her eyes in the glaring light, smoothing out her fresh cotton frock, already a little crumpled and sticky from the heat. And there he was, immediately recognizable, but smaller than she had imagined, somehow a little shrunken, frail.

'Miss Wickham?'

'Yes.'

He shook her hand. 'I'm so glad you've come. My wife has had to go away for a few days on a visit to her sister, but she asked me to send you her greetings and say how sorry she was to miss you.'

Judith was glad. It was turning out just as she wished and she would have him to herself. But she said:

'I'm sorry. I'd so much have liked to meet her.'

Now they were walking slowly up the dusty road, the girl silent and breathless, the man talking easily and gaily, asking for news of her brother, questioning her about her journey and where she was staying.

'Let's look a minute,' he said.

He stopped and sat wearily on a rock by the roadside, coughing. As she turned to the quivering Tuscan landscape below, Judith had a sudden realization of how ill he was and how much his quick vitality cost him.

'It's lovely.'

'Yes, lovely,' said Lawrence. 'The world is lovely.' And then, with surprising bitterness, 'But people, how I hate them. They spoil it all.'

'Oh no,' protested Judith. 'Not people, just like that. Some people, perhaps. But not people, just like that.'

'All modern people are rotten to the core,' he said vindictively,

'destroying themselves and everything else with their little beastlinesses. Well, let 'em.'

Judith was shocked. He surely couldn't mean it: How ridiculous. But she was checked by his intensity and for the moment her own world darkened and was peopled by monsters.

They started up the hill again, and again Lawrence was easy and friendly and everything sparkled and looked gay in the sunlight. The climb was a painful one, with many pauses for Lawrence to rest, so that they were glad to reach the house at last and grateful for its cool darkness. But it wasn't really dark; brightly coloured pictures hung on the chalk white walls, there were striped Mexican rugs on the tiled floor and crisp muslin curtains in the windows. The furniture was painted and everything was tremendously neat and clean, enchantingly gay.

'I'm painting now,' said Lawrence. 'I do nothing but paint. I love it.'

Judith got up and looked at the pictures on the wall. There was a holy family, a group of nuns and several portraits of peasants, all strongly, rather crudely painted in flat, bright colours. Everything he did must be wonderful, and yet she didn't really like the pictures. She gazed at them without a word, hoping, hypocritically, that her silence would be taken for admiration.

'I've cooked the dinner myself,' said Lawrence. 'Are you hungry? I do hope you'll like it.'

He went to the kitchen and returned with a delicious smelling stew pot. They sat down.

'Oh, the potatoes. I've forgotten the potatoes,' he cried.

'Shall I fetch them?' said Judith, jumping up. He looked so frail and worn.

'Yes, do. They're on the stove. Just bring them in as they are, in the pan.'

The kitchen was as neat and fresh as the rest of the house. Judith loved it all. She took the pan and, walking happily back, put it down on the red and white check table cloth.

'Come on,' said Lawrence, and they ate hungrily, enjoying the good food and the rough red wine. When they had finished their figs and grapes and were starting to clear the table, Lawrence looked at the girl severely.

'You need a lot of training about the house.' Judith blushed guiltily as she saw the black ring on the table cloth where she had

put the pan, but Lawrence laughed and said: 'You should have seen my wife when I first married her! She didn't know a thing about housework, I can tell you. And even now, she doesn't know much. As for shopping! I don't believe she'll ever get these Italian weights and measures right.' He himself was so quick and deft, washing the plates, putting the kitchen to rights. But his wife, it seemed, was a real lady, incompetent. He was immensely proud of her.

They sat in the wicker armchairs and talked.

'I do so love your books,' Judith was longing to say. 'They mean so much to me. They are more real to me than the real world.' But she couldn't say that or any of the other things. All the heavy intensity that she had brought to this meeting was dissolved by his gaiety, his preoccupation with detail and his disconcerting outbursts of irritation. And yet, somehow, she felt shallow and frivolous in face of his amazing authenticity. He was a very sick man.

So he told her about Mexico and she told him about Egypt.

'I hated it,' she said. 'It was all so dead and old and finished. And the people, just living on the surface of it, quite disconnected. They seemed to have nothing to do with the country at all—didn't belong to it somehow. They were just living there, but they didn't belong.'

Lawrence nodded.

'But Palestine,' the girl went on. 'That was different. I loved Palestine. It was green and growing up.' She began to tell him how she had ridden up Mount Carmel with a friend and had spent the day in a Jebel Druse village. Their ponies had bolted and her friend, who had never ridden before, had fallen off. The Arabs were highly amused. And in the evening they had sat with the Chief in his big white room, lit by a single oil lamp, and all the men of the village, in their black robes and white turbans, had come silently in and sat shadowy on the floor, close to the walls. Then someone had called for music and after much chatter a man had started to play on a reedy pipe; a monotonous tune, over and over again. Suddenly a boy jumped up and began to dance, his arms and body motionless, but with delicate, subtle movements of his feet. In the growing excitement a man sprang up and then another, following the boy with a quick counter rhythm, till there were four of them dancing in single file, and the whole place was

wildly alive. It was too much for the player—with a shout he flung his pipe across the room. Someone caught it and took up the scrawny tune—the black mass of men swayed and clapped till the excitement overwhelmed them and they all staggered out, drunken and laughing, into the cold, moonlit night.

Judith stopped, out of breath, a little drunk again at the memory. Lawrence was pleased.

‘You’re all right,’ he said. ‘You understand things a little.’

Judith was delighted, triumphant. He had said she was all right! Of course—but all the same she felt troubled, a little ashamed. It had been true, about the sterility of Egypt, about Palestine and about the strange excitement of the dancing. But in a way it hadn’t been her own experience at all, for it had been lived and seen with the eyes lent her by his books. And Lawrence, Lawrence who understood everything, simply hadn’t seen through her; he was pleased with her for what was essentially his, not hers.

‘Two friends of ours are coming up later on,’ he was saying, ‘to look at my pictures. Two ladies, sisters. They live in Florence and do a little sketching. We call them the Virgins. They’re nice.’

He was coughing again, looking drawn and tired. ‘Forgive me,’ he said, ‘I ought to rest a little now. It’s quite silly, but I’m supposed to rest.’

‘But of course,’ said Judith. He did so hate admitting he was ill.

‘Would you like to read one of my stories that has been published in America?’ he asked. ‘It’s a good story—very good. True and tender. But that didn’t prevent its readers from being shocked and from writing to the Editor to say his magazine wasn’t fit for their wives and daughters to read. Not fit to read! My lovely story! Oh, their dirty, mean, poky little minds! There was quite an uproar and the Editor was frightened. He knew my story was good, but he wouldn’t stand by me because he was frightened for his wretched magazine.’ Lawrence spoke with intense bitterness, and this time Judith shared his indignation.

‘How disgusting,’ she cried.

She curled up in the chair and read the story. She was lost again in the magic of his writing, his delicate perception and flamelike vitality. And again she longed to tell him how wonderful she thought his work was, how much it meant to her and how she really understood. She wanted him to know that she too was alive and aware. She wanted to tell him about herself and all that she

had been through, to show him that she knew about love and suffering and death. All the time she had meant to tell him that; she had been so sure. But now doubt crept in, and again she felt curiously ashamed. Why? Lawrence, happier, lighter than she had expected, with his rather absurd grudges, his spite and his bitter outbursts. Yet, in the man himself, even more than in his books, there was a quality of sincerity that she had never met before, a clear integrity that, by contrast, made all her meanings half meant. She felt raw and untried.

Lawrence came back, refreshed and smiling, and hummed as he went into the kitchen to make tea.

‘Here they come,’ he called.

The Misses Smith, like as two peas, came into the room. In spite of the hot Italian sun, both were dressed in trim grey flannel suits buttoned tightly over their thin chests, both wore grey felt hats and carried, rather incongruously, bright parasols. Their kindly, faded faces lit with pleasure at the sight of Lawrence and he, a charming host, chatted and teased as he handed them tea and pastries and warmed them with his attentiveness. Judith was puzzled. For all his alleged hatred of humanity, Lawrence seemed to like them so much, these rather dull, prim and elderly Virgins. And they, though they spoke to him severely, as if he were some reprehensible small boy, were clearly delighted by him, blossomed and grew animated in his presence.

With instinctive cruelty the girl stretched in her chair, flaunting her fresh roundness, her uncreased youth. But the Virgins didn’t notice; they were concentrated on Lawrence.

‘Now look at the pictures,’ he said.

Obediently they rose and stood in front of the holy family. A young Joseph, dark faced, grinning slightly, dominated the picture, standing tall and rather coarse, with his arm possessively round Mary. And she leaned placidly against him, looking up, utterly careless of the child that was perched upon her knee. Like Judith, the Misses Smith were silent and it was clear that they, like her, didn’t care for the picture. But Judith now veered passionately in defence of Lawrence’s work. ‘Silly old things,’ she thought, and she said:

‘Lovely, isn’t it?’

The Virgins didn’t answer.

When they came to the bevy of nuns, however, it seemed to please them better.

'But why did you put *him* in?' asked the elder Miss Smith, pointing to the figure of a peasant who peered derisively at the group from behind a corner of the convent. 'He spoils it.'

'Why, he's the whole point of the picture,' said Lawrence, laughing.

He went to a cupboard, brought out a sheaf of water colours and started to show them.

'That's good,' said one Miss Smith, and the other agreed. Here was something they understood and, looking through the pile, they spoke as fellow artists, discussing, criticizing.

'Here's one I particularly like,' said Lawrence. He grinned maliciously. 'It's called "Le Pisseur".'

They all looked. 'But why?' thought Judith. 'Why? I don't see it.'

The younger Miss Smith was the first to speak. She flushed.

'Really, Lawrence,' she said, 'You go too far.'

Lawrence was furious.

'What do you mean?' he cried. 'I go too far? What's wrong with the picture? Look at it. Look at that lovely curve. It's a lovely, natural thing.'

But it was too much for the Virgins. They were really shocked and hurt.

'No, no, Lawrence,' said the elder. 'You shouldn't do these things. You really shouldn't.'

After they had gone, Lawrence was still angry.

'The impudence,' he said, 'the incredible impudence. To speak like that to me. I'm a real artist and they take it on themselves to say things like that to me!'

'Oh, well,' said Judith, secure in being all right, in understanding things a little, in her wholehearted allegiance to him. 'Oh, well—the Virgins.'

Lawrence paused. He looked at her, mocking, amused.

'You're the real virgin, you know,' he said.

RHYS DAVIES  
D. H. LAWRENCE  
IN BANDOL

THE winter of 1928 I was living in the South of France. A letter arrived one morning: '... would you care to come and be my guest in this small and inexpensive hotel for a few days? My wife and I would both be pleased if you came—D. H. Lawrence.' Some friends of his in London had sent him my first novel and told him I was in Nice.

I had always imagined him as a remote inaccessible person, brooding and alone in his later esoteric rages and fumings, impatient of the ordinary European world, flying from it to places like Mexico and Australia. Inaccessible even while in Europe. In London I had learned very little about him as a person; the younger set in which I moved had never seen him; he was becoming a legendary figure, mystic, and with more than a touch of the hieratic about him. But I had always wanted to meet him. So I was surprised and thrilled when out of Bandol, along the coast, came the note. How nice of him, I thought in excitement and a little fear, to invite me, a stranger, to stay with him.

I went in trepidation. The visit was so important to me. Just as his books had meant as much to me as all my own experiences of life, becoming mixed with those experiences, I thought this meeting would intensify what he had already given me. For the younger generation of writers in England then, in that strange confused directionless decade after the war, he alone seemed to be carrying a torch. True, a smoky, wild torch. But nevertheless a light, though exactly on what path it was shedding illumination was often a matter for dispute, quarrel and even derision. I think we admired him because he was not sitting down inertly during those slack years. He was crying aloud, if sometimes incoherently, of the deceit, falseness and dangers of those apparently victorious after-war years. Not that he was political, or even social, minded. His message was directed into the heart, the loins and what he would call 'the bowels of mankind'. Meaning instinct as opposed to the mechanization of the individual. His work was a fresh



announcement of life. Furthermore, he used language as no one had used it before.

In the train I asked myself what I thought he'd be like as a person—he had written to say he would meet me at the station, and I had seen only one photograph of him, a youthful one. I found I thought of him as a big sombre man with a vehement beard, traces of his mining *milieu* in him, rugged, savage and a little rude. Yet though he was not big, sombre or unkempt, as I descended from the train I instantly recognized him in the crowd on the platform—and he me—and there he was smiling, even gay, his high voice rippling and easy as he asked me about the journey. Standing on a rock at the gateway of the station, Mrs. Lawrence, aloft, handsome and bright-plumaged, was searching over the heads of the people for us. She, too, was gay and cheerful. It seemed something happy, even a joke, that I had come safely the short distance from Nice. In the car we chattered like magpies. My nervous excitement and twinges of fear fled. I was very glad I had come. Lawrence looked at me keenly with his bright, perhaps too bright, eyes and smiled; Frieda laughed, and I felt livelier than I had done for a long time. Just then I did not feel that I had approached the wilderness habitation of one who, feeding on locusts and wild honey, was lifting his terrible voice against the world.

This first note of frivolous gaiety, alas, was not always to be maintained. I, like everybody who came into contact with him, got my share of St. John the Baptist denunciation. But for that first hour or two all was charm and ease. We entered the drowsy, placidly-run hotel purring at each other: it was the hotel to which Katherine Mansfield used to bring her nervous exhaustion and her lady-Hamlet diary. There was an air of tranquil indolence. The milky blue sea was lazy under the hotel windows.

Lawrence was a small thin man with a most fascinating head. Finely shaped, his head had both delicacy and rude strength. His beard and hair, of a ruddy brown, shone richly and, with his dark eyes, were keen with vitality. His hands were sensitively fine, and beautiful in movement. These features suggested a delicacy that at last had been finely tempered from ages of male and plebeian strength: a flower had arrived from good coarse earth. His thinness was neat, lively, and vibrant with awareness of others. To be with him was to feel a different and swifter beat within oneself.

The stupid little behaviour of ordinary life, the little falsehoods, the little attitudes, rituals and poses, dropped away and one sat with him clear and truthful.

That first evening I spoke, when alone with Mrs. Lawrence, of the admiration and respect of the *young* people in London, how eagerly we looked to Lawrence, how mocking we were of the officious pomposities of the enthroned gods. 'You must tell him that,' she said quickly, 'it will please him so much. Because he feels they *all* hate him.' I told Lawrence, as sincerely as I could. But he was doubtful. I insisted. He shook his head unbelievably. I became perplexed: didn't the man *want* admiration and disciples, I asked myself a little angrily and unable to see, just then, that he had been so wounded by English attacks that his old cry of anguish, 'They are all against me', had become at last a blindly violent mania.

Thereupon Lawrence broke into such abuse of the young that I was discomfited. Ah, why didn't they stand up, he fumed, and fight to make the world theirs, why didn't they smash, smash, smash? Why did they tolerate the impositions of the old world, the old taboos and the mongrel trashy contacts of the civilization they were forced into? The men did not know even how to handle a woman: they wanted to be treated as women themselves: and the women were lost, senseless, vicious—but because their men had failed them.

Yet his arraignment of the young was not so wholehearted as his fierce raging hatred of the generation that sat in tight yet flabby ruling of the world, the moneyed and the governing classes particularly. It was they who were rotting the world, it was they who closed themselves to the voice of the spirit and lived only in the vulgar transaction of being worldlyly successful, of attaining at all costs the power to grind down someone else. The young he blamed for allowing them to do it without protest.

'Kick,' he said, 'kick all the time, make them feel you know what they are. Because you *do* know, you're intelligent enough. The young know, they *know*, and yet they let be. Oh dear, it drives me to despair when I see them holding back, letting be. Because your chance is now; the world is all wobbling and wants a new direction.'

And his voice, become shrill as he was roused—and how easily he was roused to an extreme pitch of intensity!—would finish in

a heave of sighing despair. Later he spoke of the way those elders had tried to curb him, how, indeed, they *had* curbed him. 'I know I'm in a cage,' he rapped out, 'I know I'm like a monkey in a cage. But if anyone puts a finger in my cage, I bite—and bite hard.'

Uneasy though such tirades as these made me, I saw then that he was certainly caged. He was caged by censorship and persecution chiefly, but there was also his consumption and the exile this meant; and he was caged by the contempt, the laughter, the cheap sneers and the suggestive and cunning propaganda of his enemies who spoke and wrote of him at this time (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* had not long been published) as a frustrated sexual maniac, pornographic and indecent. Caged, which was the same thing as a retreat to the desert, he had arrived at that prophetic stage (and these were the last two years of his life) when the civilized human race appears one day as effete idiots, another as a pack of hyenas and wolves. But, though he writhed away, he could not turn his back on people, he could not rid himself of his vehement awareness of people: this was the motive power of his tremendous nervous vitality—and this it was that was treacherously exhausting his body. His condition at this period might have been called tragic. Yet, because of that passionate awareness still burning in him, one could not think of him as anything but a great dynamo of life, still generating with a wealthy fertility the magic of existence. Those pungent, energetic and fecund recent books of his!

At this time in Bandol he was writing the satirical poems to be called *Pansies* and also painting one or two pictures. He told me he would write no more novels; *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was to be his last long work of fiction, the last large attempt to tell men and women how to live. For all his fury and rages, he got immense fun out of writing *Pansies*. He would write them in bed in the mornings, cheerful and chirpy, the meek sea air blowing in from the enchanting little bay outside his window. He sat up in bed, a little African straw cap on the back of his head—'It keeps my brain warm,' he said, afterwards presenting me with another of these little native caps. There was something perky and bird-like about him thus, and he was intensely happy and proud of the *Pansies*; he would read out the newest ones with delight, accentuating the wicked sharp little pecks in them. He little thought of the ridiculous heavy-handed official interference these vivid little

lizards of poems were about to endure. Yet in the end they emerged triumphant, with their tails gaily up.

But it was out of his painting he seemed to get the most joy, turning to it with relief and a sense of escape that perhaps in words was denied him—for in all Lawrence's later books, luxuriant though they are with vivid life, there is an unhappy sense of recoil, as if the full blaze of his soul could not be got entirely on the pages and the writer had retired baffled into himself again, to brood and gather strength for another terrific outrush. But on a canvas he could paint those rich sensuous shades he loved so much, paint them in their own colours, not in black words; he could give a goat or a swan actual shape, a tree, a flower, a nude, in their own colours. Yet, being Lawrence and not a novelist playing about with paint, it was not enough to give them pictorial representation; there must be that exuberant surge of passion, so that every line and every shade of those nudes, flowers and animals must blaze with it. At their London exhibition (which was raided by the police) the pictures embarrassed people, the Lawrence vehemence was too naked on canvas, it confronted one too suddenly. A book is more secretive, its appeal slower: particularly the Lawrence books have to be read several times before they yield their full meaning. It was said the paintings were faulty in drawing and construction, bad *pictures*—as undoubtedly they were. But because of that Lawrence intensity in them the technical errors seemed not to matter; almost because of the errors they achieved a barbaric aliveness. And to their painter they gave intense joy, they were so actual before his eyes, giving visual representation to a sensuousness he tried to get into his words. He was almost pathetic in his absorption in these paintings; he said that words bored him now.

‘ . . . my soul is burning  
as it feels the slimy taint  
of all those nasty police-eyes like snail tracks smearing  
the gentle souls that figure in the paint . . . ’

he wrote after the police-raid in London. The opinion, sometimes expressed even now, that Lawrence sought deliberately to incur official censorship, is completely false. I was with him often during the police and newspaper activities over *Lady Chatterley* and *Pansies*. Their effect on him was either like a spiritual vomiting

or a fury that made his very appearance that of a demon. And he had not the kind of calculation to scheme all this out. Of the many accusations made against him nothing could be more fantastically untrue than that he was a humbug.

Once he rapped out at me: 'All you young writers have me to thank for what freedom you enjoy, even as things are, for being able to say much that you couldn't even hint at before I appeared. It was I who set about smashing down the barriers.'

The afternoons and evenings were given over to idleness. Walking tired him, so we would dawdle at the edge of the sea in the sun. These afternoons in the sun with him seemed to have a living peace that was strangely refreshing; he seemed to spread around him, his rages quietened for a while, a conciliatory atmosphere of awareness, so that the lazy roll of the sea, that ancient and ever-young blue sea, and the voices of the naked boys at play on the plage (it was his picture of these boys that was the chief cause of the London raid), became a harmony that gave, to me at least, a fresh and satisfying ease. He would ask me about my childhood in Wales, my home life, my reactions to the constrictions and religious bigotry of a nonconformist period. He said:

'What the Celts have to learn and cherish in themselves is that sense of mysterious magic that is born with them, the sense of mystery, the dark magic that comes with the night especially, when the moon is due, so that they start and quiver, seeing her rise over their hills, and get her magic into their blood. They want to keep that sense of the magic mystery of the world, a moony magic. That will shove all their nonconformity out of them.'

Another time he broke into a lamentation for the old pre-war England, shaking his bearded head, his voice becoming hollow with the realization that that England was dead: 'Ah, you young don't know what England could mean. It's all been broken up for you, disrupted. I'm glad I was born at my time. It's the sense of adventure that's gone, and there wasn't all this ashy taste in the mouth. The fun is gone. That's what you haven't got.'

And though he would speak with contempt and anger of the economic poverty of his childhood and the horrible dreariness that trails behind mining-village life, his days in those districts of his youth seemed, as he talked, to have given him intense glee and satisfaction. He would tell of some of the characters of

Derbyshire, so that bits of old England stood out before me with Shakespearean gusto.

'But nowadays,' he lamented, 'all pleasure takes place in people's heads. They don't *do* and *live* funny things any more, they've become much too mental and smart. The old England is gone and you've let her slip away.' Again and again he harped on the inertia of the young in not springing to save the real, beautiful England. And, because of his tuberculosis, one couldn't taunt him with his own long exile from the damp soggy land. Besides, was he not protesting enough in his books?

An interesting admission he made to me was that he had come to respect his father much more than when he wrote *Sons and Lovers*. He grieved having painted him in such a bitterly hostile way in that book. He could see now that his father had possessed a great deal of the old gay male spirit of England, pre-puritan, he was natural and unruined deep in himself. And Lawrence, by implication, criticized his mother who had so savagely absorbed him, the son. Frieda told me, in answer to my opinion that *Sons and Lovers* was Lawrence's finest book, 'No, it's an evil book, because of that woman in it, his mother.' I was, of course, judging the book as a literary creation.

Lawrence was exceedingly puritan himself in many things, and very chapel-English. He was even an old-maidish prude. One evening I repeated a coarsely funny story that was going the rounds of the Riviera just then. It was received in blank silence. No, not blank; a silence full of freezing reproach. Stories that pulled a face at sex and teased it he abhorred. On the other hand, one was allowed to use in ordinary conversation all the 'indecent' words, all those expressive words used by sailors, navvies and undergraduates which can so neatly abridge and clarify one's sentences. Which was a kind concession.

Crotchety though he was at times, he seldom irritated me. He was so entirely without reserve, he was so aware of one, his personality came forth with such a full glow, sometimes in a martial march, true, but most often in a bright recognition that had a sturdy, ardent eagerness. To argue with him was difficult. In spite of one's frequent mental doubt, elsewhere in one's being there was the feeling that, in some burning world beyond logic, he was supremely right. If one could cut away all the weeds of principles and behaviour that had got into one since self-consciousness began,

one felt that there, in the natural, instinctive self, was the truth that lived in him so undiminished. He wrote in one of his studies: 'The soul has many motions, many gods come and go. Try and find your deepest issue, in every confusion, and abide by that. Obey the man in whom you recognize the Holy Ghost; command when your honour comes to command.' And I remember his saying to me: 'When you have come to a decision, whatever your mental calculations tell you, go by what you feel here'—and with his quick intent gesture he placed his hands over and around his belly—'go by that, what you feel deep in you, not by what your head tells you'.

He was obsessed by the mischief done by 'mentality' when it usurped the emotions or feeling or, perhaps, that Holy Ghost of which he wrote, the uncontaminated texture in a man which must be preserved if he is to live truly. Modern literature suffered from mentality almost completely, he complained. Cerebral poems, creations of witch-novelists, with characters 'like those wooden figures in a child's Noah's Ark'. Cerebral fornications made modern novels indecent. And he would give a broadly amusing burlesque of some of his very famous literary contemporaries, all 'gorping and puffing away importantly for success'.

He had a magical talent for burlesque, and his performance of a certain novelist as a pompous whale churning the literary seas and spouting up water was so realistic that both the great industrious novelist and the stupid mass of whale were present in the room, but miraculously united. In the same way he could evoke flowers, animals and reptiles out of the air with a wonderful cunning. Once he described the lively adventures of his Italian terrier with such marvellous absorption into the canine world that D. H. Lawrence disappeared and I, too, felt myself turning into a dog: I remember especially his acting of the dog's writhing agony after it had been run over, its will to live, its pleased sniffing at life as it recovered, and its sudden bouncing forward into a fresh world of smells. He was that dog. This power of entering the soul of non-human things is the characteristic I remember most clearly. In the same way, it is for his vital descriptions of landscape and 'spirit of place', and of flowers, beasts and trees, that his books yield one most *pleasure* now.

At the hotel was a young negro waiter. Lawrence took, in his usual energetic way, a deep dislike to the youth. The dislike was



so intense and its object so innocently unaware of it that I was vastly amused. To see Lawrence's eyes gleam with watchful revulsion as the waiter laid a dish on the table seemed utterly grotesque to me: why be so stirred over the young man? It was his hands Lawrence watched: thin dusky nervous hands laying very, very carefully a plate of *vol-au-vent* on the table. I watched too, as I had been bade.

'You saw his hands, how uncertain they were, no feeling in them! No feeling. It's quite sickening, he can't even place a plate down properly, he fumbles, hesitates, it's like a dead hand moving, every moment I expect to see the dish go to the floor.' And the denunciation came, as I expected. 'All his movements are so *mental*, he doesn't trust to his blood, he's afraid. Look at him walking down the room now, look at his legs, look how they hang together and cower, pushed forward only by his mind. Ugh!' And he ended with a sharp hiss of absolute revulsion. It was true, as I looked carefully at the young man's legs, that they were rather soft and dejected-looking, clinging together as though for company as he took his short, gliding kind of step down the room. Yes, his gait was vaguely unpleasant, I decided, that hesitating glide, as though practised, and the legs with their subjected look. There was little that was spontaneous, certainly, about the youth. But this fierce antipathy!

Of course, out of such vehemence and such antipathy came *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and *Women in Love*, and the others.

Then there was the English maiden lady in the hotel, one of those respectable spinsters who were scattered all over the South of France and Italy. This lady, he swore, would have liked to kill him. Her social advances had been ignored. And one evening he wouldn't deliver up to her the hotel *Daily Mail* as she hovered and twittered about for it; he had whisked round to her demanding: 'Do you *want* this paper? I'm reading it.' The lady had shrunk back, mumbling that, no, she did not want the paper. But he had seen murder in her. In a shrill way he declared to me: 'She would have had me taken out and killed then and there.' The following morning—her bedroom was next to his—he insisted that through the dividing wall waves of hate and murder had been arriving from her. I think he saw her as some sort of witch. However, I was glad to see, on my next visit to Bandol, that he had made his peace with the lady. They now met on the common ground of

painting. She made little water-colours of local scenes; Lawrence did his strident nudes. They almost flirted together with their brandished paint-brushes. Frieda was malicious. 'One of Lorenzo's old maids,' she said, telling me he had a weakness for these English spinsters.

Observing him strolling about in the sunshine of the plage below the hotel terrace, I mused over his extraordinary attraction as a person. In a faded old blue jacket, wispy trousers and a black flapping hat, he moved about with a springy awareness. There was something of both a bird and a lizard about him, light and winging, no flesh. Perky, bird or lizard like. Yet the thundering torrents, black hatreds and teeming awareness in that frail figure! Just then I felt, rather than was mentally aware of, the struggle against death-processes that was taking place in him. (I remembered he had just written a poem about a November sun—'my sun' sinking 'wintry but dauntless' into the west: was it prophetic?). The curiously fiery little figure winging about the plage was somehow electrically dangerous; it bore a high voltage of life. No, it could not die, with that bright eagerness in its wings.

His irascibility and irritation had the sharp, crackling, devouring temper of a fire. There was nothing small and fussy in his outbursts. They came in an avalanche, a torrent, a flood. Even over such a trivial incident as being half-an-hour late for the hotel lunch. I had met Frieda on the plage and we dawdled in a café over our apéritifs—time fled; it was enchanting to sit before that unspoilt (as it was then) native little plage of Bandol in the morning sun, while the villagers flopped about lazily in their carpet slippers. Unconscious that we were late we ambled back to the hotel. Suddenly I saw, watching our strolling approach from the top of the flight of steps leading to the hotel terrace, a dark sinister figure poised as if to swoop down on us, a malign vulture.

As we mounted the steps he was literally dancing with rage. What he said actually I don't remember, but as he hopped about, gesticulating in his Italian way, he poured out a flood of words that seemed to reduce the universe to nothing. He was the serpent come out of the heart of chaos to hiss forth death and desolation. I was interested, objectively, but decided that before such passion a polite apology for being late would be fatuous. And quite soon the tornado subsided into a vexed silence out of which came, presently, a charming offer. In the dining-room was a tray of

newly-caught lobsters. These were a supplement on the table d'hôte price. Lawrence, the host, pointed them out and, coaxingly, was sure that I would like a lobster. I shook my head. He insisted. Then I became cantankerous. I refused to be wooed with lobsters. Frieda was not so silly. She enjoyed the fish with an unruffled air of 'however extraordinary my husband, one does not have lobsters every day.'

There were times when I could not bear to have him near me, and I would leave the hotel and go for long walks. It was the only way to keep one's will intact in this over-potent intimacy. He was too much of a magician, too much of an enchanter. There were times, indeed, when in everything he was too much. This, of course, was because I was still in a world which he had long ago left in disgust. I was even glad when it was time for me to leave Bandol, though for the next few months I returned again and again, glad to go to him, as I was glad to leave him. But such a dominant force as his was not for continual companionship. I do not wonder that his old cherished scheme for founding a community of fellow spirits came to nothing. For all his charm, aliveness and interest, men, unless they were completely negative, could never live for long in peace with Lawrence. And he had no use for negative people.

His marriage seemed to me a prosperous one. Frieda had a lioness quality that could meet his outbursts with a fine swing and dash: when really stung, she would shake her mane and grunt and growl; sometimes she charged. Their life together was an opulent one; her spirit was direct and generous, and his was laughing, malicious and subtle. Their notorious brawls were grand. She would lash out, and, gathering his forces with confident ease, he met her like a warrior. He would attack her for smoking too many cigarettes, having her hair cropped, taking a wrong line of thought, eating too many cakes in a café at Toulon, or for trying to be intellectual or aristocratic. He kept her simmering, subtly; for a natural inclination to a stout German placidity threatened to swamp her fine lioness quality.

On one occasion I remember her suffering a little from one of those odd bouts that visit women now and again—sometimes governing their lives—when they become the dupe of some shoddy mystical crank who hypnotizes them into rapt ecstatic states in which they imagine themselves angels, spirits or astral

beings—anything that has no vulgar *body*. A German book on Rasputin has been sent her and she read it with fascinated avidity. This incensed Lawrence to a vituperation that again, to me, seemed out of all proportion unjustified by the offence. He drew a mocking picture of women prostrate and fawning round the Russian monk, their faces gaping up for sensual religious sustenance. In Frieda's case the rapt interest in the mystic monk was only tentative. But even the gleam of interest was enough for Lawrence, who had detected it at once, and until he had swept the contamination away, his voice like a vigorously-handled broom, he could not rest. He bridled to me: 'When she came down to dinner full of that Rasputin, I could have smacked her face across the soup.'

To see, after their disputes, the puling, pattering little escapades of some marriages! This one had abandon. And Frieda did not impose on her husband, ill though he was, that female bossiness, that stealthy overpowering need to subjugate, which women, crying to themselves that they are doing a man good, can wind round him in oppressive folds. She could leave him alone and was cheerfully alive in her own sunny activity, or she would deftly touch him, flashing out some vain feminine illogicality that stirred him to comic denunciation. They had not *settled down* into what is known as peace but is really something else.

*Pansies* was finished and typed in Bandol; an incomplete set was despatched to England from that village post-office of tolerant France. We dawdled through the mild days, sometimes taking long drives into the country in the village droshky: Lawrence disliked motor-cars. Out in the country, while the ancient nag munched the herbage and Frieda and I strolled about, he would squat on his heels collier-fashion and remain thus for an hour, unmoving, hunched up like a very old and meditating bird, his shut eyelids lifted to the sun. There was something eternal and primitive about him thus; and a delicate, untrammelled peace. Sometimes he would open one eye like an owl, keep it briefly on me and Frieda, and lapse back into his meditation.

There was nothing of the cathedral air of the great writer about him; no pomp, no boomings, no expectation of a respectful hush from apprentice hands such as myself. One warm afternoon he announced, after a hint from me, that he would read a selection of *Pansies* to me and Frieda. After a rather heavy lunch

we went to my bedroom, where there was a sofa, on which I foolishly lay. And Lawrence had not a good reading voice; it was apt to become stringy and hollow. Very soon, to the sound of verses about the harsh flight of swans clonking their way over a ruined world, I went off into deep slumber. When I woke he and Frieda had stolen away. But when we met at tea-time he twinkled with amusement. Only Frieda's face contained a surprised rebuke.

In a few days news came of the fussy official interference with *Pansies*, the opening and seizing of the packet of incomplete MSS. in the post by the English authorities. It afterwards appeared that anything posted from Bandol to England just then was subject to scrutiny; it was known that the author of *Lady Chatterley* was living in the village. What a surprise the authorities must have had, really, for there was nothing in even the complete *Pansies* which could be described as indecent by a normal person. A few quips and bits of plain-speaking, in good household English; that was all. Still, they kept this incomplete collection. Afterwards I despatched from Nice another incomplete set, which arrived intact, and later I took to England a complete set, which was duly printed—though privately—and sold unexpurgated. Though I had no hand in the printing of this private edition, it was whispered to me one day on good authority that the flat in which I was staying had become of interest to the police: it was believed to be a distributing centre for the banned works of D. H. Lawrence. The fussiness!

Lawrence, sick in the face, crying out in his bedroom of the seizing of his darling, innocent poems, or raging on the beach as he talked of it, was depressing. He could *not* understand this new mealy-mouthed England. Ah, how the old robust England of strong guts and tongues had died! Why, why couldn't they let him have his say! The charge of indecency had an effect on him like vomiting. It was almost painful to look at him. It was in such moments as these that I felt that, more than his consumption, an evil destructive force was attacking him successfully.

He and I went together to Paris later; Frieda left for Germany to see her mother. Pirated editions of *Lady Chatterley* were appearing and Lawrence wanted to arrange for a cheap edition in Paris so that the expensive pirated editions might not command such a ready sale. In addition, he badly wanted the book to reach the masses—of England particularly. Like Tolstoy he was

indifferent to any royalty there might be from such an edition. For the pirates he had utter contempt, but was angry to think of the money they were making. One of them in Paris, hearing of the contemplated cheap edition, got into communication with him and offered royalties on all the copies already sold, on condition that no cheap edition was issued. The sum due was substantial. Lawrence wrinkled his nose in disgust, and yet, as was only to be expected, was half attracted. He twittered and was unusually indecisive: finally he went off late in the afternoon to the pirate's office, and found the place shut up: it was after office hours. 'I knew then,' he sighed, when he arrived back at our hotel, 'I didn't want to see the man. I stood there on the pavement with relief and was utterly glad the office was closed.' I think he had consulted his midriff on the pavement. He refused to meet or correspond with the pirate after that.

In Paris I witnessed another of his strange rages. We took a taxi to Sylvia Beach's book-shop in a little street near the Odeon; he wanted to ask Miss Beach if she would publish *Lady Chatterley*; she had already dared Joyce's *Ulysses* (a book Lawrence had not much respect for: too *cerebral*). The taxi-driver, a big bull-necked creature, couldn't find the little street. As we cruised for the second time round the Odeon, Lawrence began to start and writhe. The powerful, unmoving back of the driver roused him to a yell. 'The fat fool!' he screeched—in English—'A taxi-driver! Fool, fool, fool,' he stamped and writhed. 'Or else he's doing it purposely, knowing we are foreigners.' In the tiny enclosed space it was like having a shrill demented monkey beside me. After dipping into another street, again the cab cruised round the Odeon. To Lawrence's yells and bangs on the glass screen the driver's steady bull neck remained unperturbed. Ruddy beard stuck out, Lawrence's pale face was lifted in agony. The immovable neck in front was bringing on a psychic crisis.

At last the shop was discovered, and the taxi skipped up to the kerb softly as a purring cat. Lawrence's thin body exploded out of the door; I followed in readiness for a brawl on the pavement. But I was disappointed. The two men faced each other. The driver's big moony face was shining with a most childlike grin; it was all a friendly joke to him. And in heavy French he told us that he was a Russian, an exile, and had only recently begun his job as taxi-driver. He beamed with good humour; Russian-like, he

accepted Lawrence's fury with benign understanding. Lawrence had started back from that broad Slav fleshy face. I could almost see the steam of his rage evaporating. His prancings became stilled. As we entered Miss Beach's shop he said to me, 'I couldn't be angry with him, I couldn't. Did you see his face! Beautiful and human. He lives in his blood, that man, he is solidly in his blood—not like these slippery French who are all mind. I saw it at once and I respected him.' Miss Beach was not interested in an edition of *Lady Chatterley*.

Though the weather was warm and sunny, and Paris at its best, he hated it, like all cities. He couldn't bear people close-packed about him, the grey slick city faces, and he would scuttle back to our hotel in Montparnasse after meals. We stayed there a month, and all the time he fumed to get away, a city darkened his spirit and humanity became almost completely hopeless. Knowledge of his presence got about, and he was offered a banquet by a literary organization: to his horror. His chest became ominously troublesome. But such was the vitality he spread about him, even in Paris, that alarm and suspicion of his physical state would vanish.

It was in Paris that he dauntlessly refused to keep an appointment, made by a friend, with a first-class specialist in bronchial diseases. Half an hour before the time fixed, and ready dressed to go to the specialist, he suddenly refused to leave the hotel. It seemed to me that he believed a submission to medical art was an act of treachery to the power within him, his gods.

But his nights became restless; often I woke to his coughing and writhing in the next room. One night, instinctively, but half asleep, I hurried through the communicating door and found him as though in mortal combat with some terrible invisible opponent who had arrived in those mysterious dead hours that follow midnight. The dark tormented face and haggard body was like some stormy El Greco figure writhing on the bed. Was this the perky bird or lizard figure of Bandol! He seemed to be violently repudiating some evil force, a wretched man nearly overcome by a sinister power of superhuman advantages. Alarmed, I suggested a doctor and went towards the telephone. But at once he flew into anger. No, he would *not* have a doctor. But if I would sit quietly by the bed for a while. . . . I think he needed the aid of some human presence. Soon he was calmer, lay back exhausted, unspeaking but triumphant. The opponent had gone.



A month passed before a publisher for *Lady Chatterley* was found. Frieda returned from Germany; I left for England. My regret at leaving him was mingled with a strange willingness to go. He seemed to have given me as much as I wanted, and for me he would always be near. I have spoken to many people who did not know Lawrence personally but who read his books sympathetically, and to each of them he has been alive and of the same significance as though they sat with him and were warmed by that rich personal glow of his: and they too, like myself, when he died felt for a time as though there was no sun in the world. There must have been few men who inspired such personal—but I cannot find the word: not *affection*, not *homage*, *love* is too specialized a word, and I must say, almost meaninglessly—reactions, as Lawrence. Almost that emotion he inspired has been lost: to-day particularly we are consumed with distrust of the world and therefore men. Perhaps if that emotion had been garnered and understood and cherished, the life of man would have taken a more fruitful direction—for has the world ever been more sterile than it is now, except of wars? He was a Christ of an earthly estate, and those about him knew the Godhead he had found in himself, and were warmed by it. His humanity was so purely aristocratic and undefiled. Here was the complete flowering of the spirit in flesh. Let me be not misunderstood: Lawrence was a man and no Jesus in rapt love with the Heaven that is to come; but a Christ of himself as every man can become who has once found the pure centre of his being and keeps it uncontaminated. This is what he had done. He had not submitted to the contamination that seems inevitable. Civilization had not dirtied him, in himself, though enough mud was thrown at him, and some clung for a space. It was the mud that caused those rages which seemed to be so insane.

He wrote to me now and again: gay, amusing letters, gay even in his furies against certain actions and persons in London. He wanted to start a little magazine, to be called *The Squib*, which was to consist of lampoons, leg-pulls and satiric pieces; he sent some verses for it and asked if I would be editor, with himself as guarantor of half the expenses. If he had lived it would have been a lively magazine, though I had a taste of how difficult it would have been to obtain suitable contributions; people jeered and lampooned amusingly enough in their conversation, but to get



them to set their antipathies and violences on paper!—no, they became self-conscious and wary, the labour was impossible. The idea of *The Squib*, with Lawrence adopting the pseudonym of John Doolittle, came to nothing in the end.

After brief wanderings in Spain and Germany he settled in Bandol again, and again I was eager to see him. A melancholy note had crept into his letters: '—there was a great storm yesterday—huge seas—to-day is quiet, but grey and chill and forlorn: imagine me the same.'

But he was moved from Bandol to the sanatorium at Vence. I did not believe he was dying: it could not be. Notes arrived from him; he was making arrangements for the publication in England of one of his very finest stories, *The Man who had Died*; a story of Christ's escape from death, a story rich with newly discovered splendours on earth. The newspapers published their contradictory reports; he was dying and he was very much better. They had announced his approaching death often before. And still one persisted in believing him very much alive. To read one day in the cold print of the afternoon London papers that he was dead was a strange experience. One's soul stood still and denied that death. Curious how it could not be accepted, as it had been accepted so often before in others. He who had been working in the full fructifying shine of the sun, while others produced from tombs.

But of course he was dead; at forty-five; and if we desired further proof, rude and raw proof, what more could we want than the obituary notices? Nearly all of them. But one could only read them in astonishment and horror, and avert one's head in shame as from an indecency.

Most of them did not lack length, it was true; surely this was an important writer, to demand such space! Double columns. But filled with such repetitions of revilings that one had the impression of a pack of evilly surly convicts released at last. The bad-tempered squealing, the patronising superiority, the wearisome insistence on his faults—especially this last, as though by continued repetition these particular critics were trying to convince themselves that this meanness in obituary notices was just and proper.

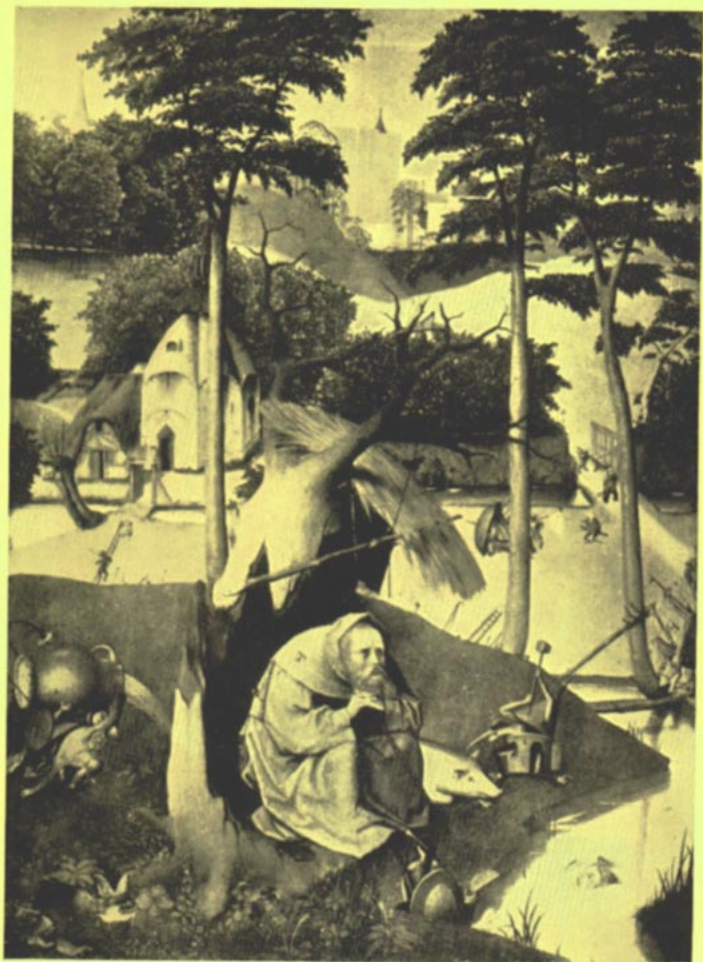
There were two exceptions to this deluge of hostility in England: the notices in *The Times Literary Supplement* and *The Manchester Guardian* were warm and truthful in their tributes to

Lawrence both as a writer and a person. From the others one gathered that he was nothing but a frustrated maniac with small occasional flashes of talent. One is not entirely at a loss to explain this insensibility to him. There are people who hate to admit the insufficiency of the existence we are forced to live. Lawrence cried this insufficiency aloud, brought out all the stale old corruptions from our being and told us what they were and what they were doing to us, particularly the corruptions of sexual life. Far better to shut them up, let them be, and go on living the pretty little make-up-a-tale of modern life. But he went into the root of life in its pristine strength. He believed that the instinctive purity and the original fertile innocence in man could still be found; he refused to accept the cynical distortions of a mechanized life, he refused to have the holiness of life blasphemed, he saw only too clearly that man was in danger of becoming barrenly closed in on himself and that soon the imprisoned spirit, lacking the radiance of true primal exchange, would turn into dark ways of destruction. His was a hateful creed, unscientific ('All scientists are liars!' cried this lover of the magic of night, when the instincts reign over their empire), illogical and retrogressive: it was maddening to be reminded of it. And of one's interior barrenness and fear.

As the days went on I began to think that his physical martyrdom and its so brutally celebrated end was inevitable. And it did not really matter now. There was the victorious magnificence of his work and of his example. But there was, too, the personal loss, the loss of a friend who had inspired that strange (alas that it should be strange!), living emotion of which I have spoken. I had written to Frieda Lawrence before he died, asking for the truth, since the papers were so contradictory; I had written that it must not be that he was very ill, that he must greet the Spring triumphantly as before. She replied:

'... No, you won't make him a chaplet of anemones any more, but anemones crown his grave now. His death was so simple and somehow great, his courage in facing death and fighting inch by inch and then at the end asking for morphia. He looked so proud, so beyond all these silly ugly dogs barking, so unconquered when he was dead.—I know you grieve too.'

Yes, his death did not matter. Still he was unconquered, standing richly in life, the warmth of the sun in his hands.



'Temptation of Saint Anthony'  
Prado, Madrid

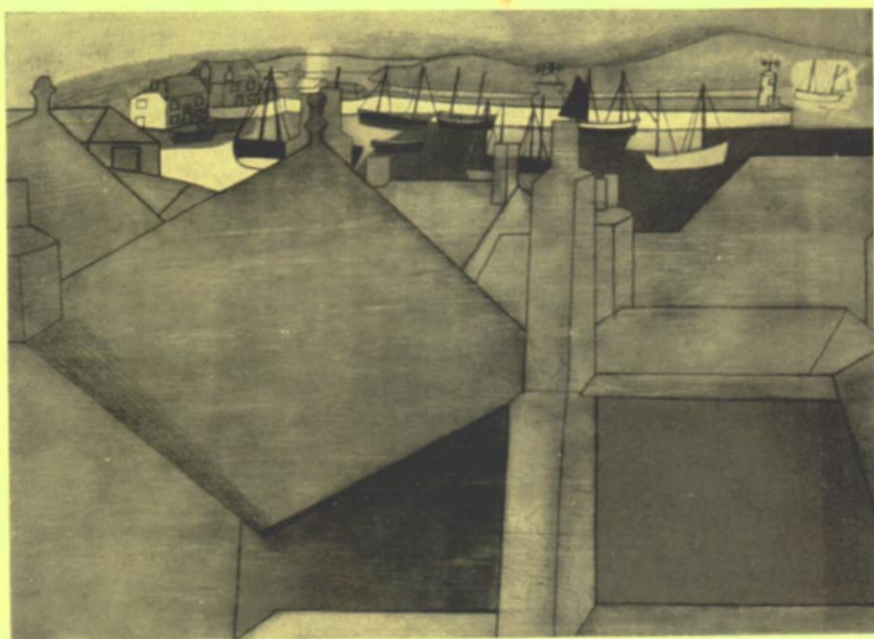


*'Temptation of Saint Anthony' Detail*  
Museum of Fine Arts, Lisbon





Illustration to Children's Book 'George & Rufus'.  
Ben Nicholson 1938.



'St. Ives', Ben Nicholson 1940

In the Summer Issue of  
**THE KENYON REVIEW**

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*On the Semantics of Poetry*, by Philip Wheelwright; *The Ball (Story)*, by Eleanor Clark; *Recent Mexican Painting*, by Nicolas Dorantes; *Bert Brecht*, by Lawrence Thompson; *On Rereading Balzac*, by William Troy; *The World of Henry Miller*, by H. J. Muller; Verse by Marianne Moore, Frederic Prokosch and Rayner Heppenstall; Reviews by Edgar Johnson, R. P. Blackmur, Lawrence Leighton, C. A. Millspaugh, Lionel Trilling, Morgan Blum, Robert Jay Wolff and Francis Fergusson; Music Chronicle, by Paul Rosenfeld; Editorial Notes.

Other recent features include: *The Legacy of Sigmund Freud*: (i) *Therapeutic*, by A. R. Martin; (ii) *Literary and Aesthetic*, by Lionel Trilling; (iii) *Philosophical*, by Eliseo Vivas; *Picasso*, by Wyndham Lewis; *For Sigmund Freud (Poem)*, by W. H. Auden; *André Malraux*, by Haakon M. Chevalier; *The Present State of Poetry: A Symposium*, by Herbert Read, Justin O'Brien and R. P. Warren; *Frederico Garcia Lorca*, by William Carlos Williams; and *Franz Kafka*, by Philip Rahv.

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*Editor*

JOHN CROWE RANSOM

*Managing Editor*

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## MARCH

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## APRIL

Poems by Frederic Prokosch, William R. Rodgers, Laurie Lee, G. M. Brady, Adam Drinan, F. Buchanan, L. S. Little, and Terence Heywood; 'A Letter to a Nephew' by J. A. Spender; 'Avant-Garde and Kitsch' by Clement Greenberg; 'The Saint', a Story by V. S. Pritchett; Montgomery Bellon, 'French Chronicle', and Stephen Spender on 'The Essential Housman'.

## MAY

Poems by William Empson, Brian Howard, Anne Ridler, Dylan Thomas, Francis Scarfe, Ruthven Todd, Laurie Lee, and W. J. Turner; 'Freedom and the Will to Power' by R. H. S. Crossman; 'The Romantic Catastrophe' by Peter Quennell; Frank Richards (Editor of *The Magnet*) replies to George Orwell; Stephen Spender, 'September Journal' (3); and 'The Works of Graham Greene' by A. Calder-Marshall.

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